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THE

ODYSSEY OF HOMER,

TRANSLATED INTO

ENGLISH BLANK VERSE,

WITH

COPIOUS ALTERATIONS AND NOTES,

PREPARED FOR THE PRESS BY THE

TRANSLATOR,

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ.

AND PUBLISHED WITH

A PREFACE BY HIS KINSMAN,

J. JOHNSON, LL.B.

CHAPLAIN TO THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.

Τάδε δ' αἰὲν πάρεσσι' ὅμοια, διὰ δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν αἰ.,—EPICHRMUS.

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1811

ODYSSEY OF HOMER

TRANSLATED INTO

ENGLISH PLEASANT VERSE

WITH

EXPLANATIONS OF THE NAMES AND

PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE POEM

TRANSLATED

WILLIAM OWEN, ESQ.

AND REVISED BY

A. W. MASON, ESQ.

LONDON, 1811.

PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

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THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS POEM WAS

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PRINTED FOR A. W. MASON, AT THE CHURCH-YARD, ST. PAUL'S.

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ODYSSEY.

ARGUMENT OF THE THIRTEENTH BOOK.

Ulysses, having finished his narrative, and received additional presents from the Phæacians, embarks; he is conveyed in his sleep to Ithaca, and in his sleep is landed on that island. The ship that carried him is in her return transformed by Neptune to a rock.

Minerva meets him on the shore, enables him to recollect his country, which, till enlightened by her, he believes to be a country strange to him, and they concert together the means of destroying the suitors. The Goddess then repairs to Sparta, to call thence Telemachus, and Ulysses, by her aid disguised like a beggar, proceeds toward the cottage of Eumæus.

BOOK XIII.

HE ceas'd, and under all the gloomy roof
The charm'd assembly, motionless and mute,
Seem'd list'ning still to hear, when thus his speech
To Laertiades the king address'd:

Ulysses, since beneath my brazen dome
Thou hast arriv'd, thou shalt not, I believe,

Like hardship suffer in thy voyage hence,
As heretofore, though long to toil inur'd.
And ye, my guests ! who daily at my board
Sweet song enjoy, and quaff your princely meed
Of gen'rous wine, hear now my warm desire.
The robes, wrought gold, and all the other gifts,
To this our guest by the Phæacian chiefs
Brought hither, in the sumptuous coffer lie.
But come—present ye to the stranger, each,
An ample tripod also, with a vase
Of smaller size, for which we will be paid
By public impost ; for the charge of all
Excessive were by one alone defray'd.

So spake Alcinoüs, and his counsel pleas'd ;
Then all retiring sought repose at home.
But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Look'd rosy forth, each hasted to the bark
With his illustrious present, which the king,
Alcinoüs, proceeding through the ship,
Safely himself beneath the seats bestow'd,
Lest it should harm or hinder, while he toil'd
In rowing, some Phæacian of the crew.
The palace of Alcinoüs seeking next
Together, they prepar'd a new regale.

For them, in sacrifice, the sacred might

Of king Alcinoüs* slew an ox to Jove
 Saturnian, cloud-girt governor of all.
 The thighs first burnt in sacrifice, all shar'd
 The noble feast; Demodocus, the while,
 Their fav'rite, striking his melodious lyre.
 But oft Ulysses to the radiant sun
 Turn'd wistful eyes, desiring his decline,
 And even now impatient to depart.
 As when some hungry swain, whose sable beeves
 Have through the fallow dragg'd his pond'rous plough
 All day, the setting sun with joy beholds,
 And hungry tends and weary to his home,
 So welcome to Ulysses' eyes appear'd
 The sun-set of that eve; directing then
 His speech to maritime Phæacia's sons,
 But to Alcinoüs chiefly, thus he said :
 Alcinoüs, o'er Phæacia's realm supreme!
 Libation made, dismiss ye me in peace,
 And farewell all ! for what I wish'd, I have,
 Conductors hence, and honourable gifts,
 With which Heav'n prosper me ! and may the Gods
 Vouchsafe to me, at my return, to find
 All safe, my spotless consort and my friends !
 May ye, whom here I leave, have happy wives,
 And see your children blest ; and may the pow'rs

* Ἱερὸν μένος Ἀλκινόοιο.

Immortal with all good enrich you all,
And from calamity preserve the land !

He ended ; they unanimous his words
Applauded loud, and bade dismiss the guest,
Who had so wisely spoken, and so well.
Then thus Alcinoüs to his herald spake :

Pontonoüs ! charging high the beaker, bear
To ev'ry guest beneath our roof the wine,
That, pray'r preferr'd to the eternal Sire,
We may dismiss our inmate to his home.

Then bore Pontonoüs to ev'ry guest
The brimming cup ; they, where they sat, perform'd
Libation due ; but the illustrious chief,
Ulysses, from his seat arising, plac'd
A massy goblet in Areta's hand,
Whom thus in grateful accents he address'd* :

Farewell, O Queen, a long farewell, till age
Arrive, and death, the appointed lot of all !
I go ; but be this people, and the king,
Alcinoüs, and thy progeny, thy joy
Yet many a year beneath this glorious roof !

* The custom was to taste the liquor, applying the lip to it very slightly, then to present the cup to the person so complimented, that he might drink first. Thus Virgil, *Æn.* i, 741.

*Primaque, libato, summo tenuis attigit ore,
Tum Bitiæ dedit.*—————C.

So saying, the hero through the palace-gate
 Issu'd, whom, by Alcinoüs' command,
 The royal herald usher'd to his bark.
 Three maidens also of Areta's train
 His steps attended ; one the robe well-bleach'd
 And tunick bore ; the corded coffer one ;
 And food the third, with wine of crimson hue.
 Arriving where the galley rode, each gave
 Her charge to some brave mariner on board,
 And all was safely stow'd. Mean-time were spread
 Linen and arras on the deck astern,
 For his secure repose. And now the chief
 Himself embarking silent laid him down.
 Then ev'ry rower to his bench repair'd ;
 They drew the loosen'd cable from its hold
 In the drill'd rock*, and resupine at once
 With lusty strokes upturn'd the flashing waves.
His eyelids soon a deathlike sleep depress'd,
 Deep, durable, and not to be dispers'd.
 She, as four harness'd stallions o'er the plain
 Shooting together at the scourge's stroke
 Toss high their manes, and rapid scour along,
 So mounted she the waves, while dark the flood

* Thus it was they moored their galleys, passing the cable
 through a rock perforated for this purpose, and lashing it fast about.
 —B. & C.

Of the resounding Deep roll'd after her.
She steady ran and safe, the falcon's flight
Outstripping, swiftest of the fowls of Heav'n ;
With such rapidity she cut the waves,
A hero bearing, as a God replete
With various wisdom, vex'd and harass'd oft
In stormy battles and tempestuous seas,
But sleeping now serenely, and resign'd
To sweet oblivion of all sorrow past.
The brightest star of Heav'n, precursor chief
Of dayspring, now arose, when at the isle
(Her voyage soon perform'd) the bark arriv'd.

In Ithaca, but from the public view
Sequester'd far, there is a certain port
Sacred to Phorcys, ancient of the Deep,
Form'd by converging shores, abrupt alike
And prominent, which from the spacious bay
Exclude all boist'rous winds ; within it ships,
The port once gain'd, uncabled ride secure.
An olive at the haven's head expands
Her branches wide, near to a pleasant cave
Umbrageous, to the nymphs devoted nam'd
The Naiads. Beakers in that cave and jars
Of stone are found ; bees lodge their honey there ;
And there on slender spindles of the rock

The nymphs of rivers weave their wondrous robes*.
 Perennial springs rise in it, and it shows
 A twofold entrance; ingress one affords
 To men, and fronts the North; but, holier far,
 The Southern opens to the Gods alone.
 There, knowing well the port, they boldly thrust
 The vessel in; she rapid plough'd the sands
 With half her keel, such rowers urg'd her on†.
 The benches left, and leaping all ashore,
 Ulysses first they gently lifted forth
 With the whole splendid couch whereon he lay,
 And plac'd him, still fast-sleeping, on the sands‡.
 His treasures next, by the Phæacian chiefs

* Porphyrius gives a very learned allegorical account of this cave and the contents of it, with much confidence in the truth of his hypothesis; but it is far too long for insertion here. The reader may find it prefixed to Barnes's edition of the Iliad. It is plainly a poetical fiction, no such cave, as Strabo and other ancient geographers testify, having ever been discoverable in Ithaca.

† Had they not been well acquainted with it, they would not have dared to push to land, as they did, with the full stress of all their oars, especially in the night.—C.

‡ They landed him in his sleep, either that they might not seem to expect a recompense, which would have been the case had they waked him, or that they might not be detained by him. Or perhaps, says the scholiast, the poet thus ordered it with a view to the sequel; since had he not been landed thus silently, and at once left alone, the suitors would have learned his arrival and have slain him.—B. & C.

At his departure giv'n him as the meed
Due to his wisdom, at the olive's foot
They heap'd, without the road, lest, while he slept,
Some needy wand'rer should invade the store.
Then homeward thence they sped. Nor Ocean's God
His threats forgot, denounc'd against divine
Ulysses, but with Jove thus first advis'd:

Eternal Sire ! I shall no longer share
Respect and reverence among the Gods,
Since e'en Phæacia's sons, although a race
Deriv'd from me*, my pleasure little heed,
For I had purpos'd, yet with many a storm
To vex Ulysses, ere he reach'd his home,
Though finally to sink whom thou hadst sworn
At last to save, was never my design.
But they have borne him sleeping o'er the waves
In a swift bark, and on his native sands
Have laid him, with a treasure at his side
Of steel, of tissu'd raiment, and of gold ;
A store surpassing all that he had own'd,
Had he return'd in peace, and still possess'd
His whole allotment of the spoils of Troy.

To whom the Sov'reign of the realms of air :

* For Phæax, founder of the race, was son of Neptune and Corcyra, the daughter of Asopus.—B. & C.

What hast thou spoken, Shaker of the shores,
Wide-ruling Neptune? Entertain no fear
Of aught dishonourable from the Gods;
The Gods will tremble to dishonour thee,
More ancient, and more powerful than they.
But should, profanely rash, a mortal man
Slight thee, revenge is ever in thy pow'r,
Accomplish all thy pleasure, thou art free.

Him answer'd then the Shaker of the shores :
I soon would use, Dread Sov'reign of the storms !
The freedom which thou giv'st, but that I wait,
Studious through fear, to learn thy pleasure first.
Now, therefore, full amid the dreary Deep
Will I destroy yon fair Phæacian bark,
Return'd from safe conveyance of her freight;
So shall they waft such wand'ers home no more,
And she shall hide their city, to a rock
Transform'd of mountainous o'ershadowing size*.

Him then Jove answer'd, gath'rer of the clouds :
Perform it, O my brother, and the deed,
Thus done, shall best be done—What time the ship
Shall draw the gazing citizens, to mark

* We are told by Eustathius, that some in his time affirmed, that a rock, resembling a ship in the form of it, was to be seen somewhere in the neighbourhood of Corcyra, which he supposes might serve the poet with a hint for this fiction.—C.

Her near approach, convert her into stone
Fast by the beach, but leave her shape the same;
Then shall they wonder, seeing such a mass
Of solid rock fix'd right before the walls.

This heard, at once the Shaker of the shores,
To fair Phæacian Scheria setting forth,
There watch'd. Erelong, by num'rous oars impell'd,
The flying bark had wellnigh reach'd the land,
When Neptune, meeting her, with outspread palm
Depress'd her at a stroke, and she became
Deep-rooted stone. Then Neptune went his way.
Mean-time th' amaz'd Phæacians as they stood
Conferring, to each other thus remark'd:

Who stays the vessel fast amid the waves?
For all afloat, and driven by the force
Of all her oars, this moment she approach'd.

So spake, untaught the cause of her delay,
The people, and Alcinoüs thus replied:

Ye Gods! my father's prophecy now strikes
My mind with force, for oftentimes would he say—
Neptune resents it, that we safe conduct
Natives of ev'ry region to their home.
He also spake prophetic of a day,
When a Phæacian gallant bark, return'd
After conveyance of a stranger hence,
Should perish in the dreary Deep, and, chang'd

To a huge mountain, cover all the town.

So spake my father, all whose words we see
This day fulfill'd. Thus therefore act we all
Unanimous ; henceforth no longer bear
The stranger home, when such shall here arrive ;
And we will sacrifice, without delay,
Twelve chosen bulls to Neptune, if, perchance,
He will commiserate us, and forbear
To hide our town behind a mountain's height.

He spake, they, terrified, the bulls prepar'd.
Thus all Phæacia's senators and chiefs,
Pray'r off'ring as they stood, encompass'd round
The altar of the Sov'reign of the Deep.
Mean-time Ulysses from his native soil,
After long sleep, arose, unconscious where,
Through years of absence and the sable mist
By Pallas cast around him, that his friends,
His citizens, and even his espous'd
Might fail in recollection of his form,
Till, with herself his guide, he should at length
Avenge him well on all his impious foes.
All objects, therefore, in the hero's eyes
Seem'd alien, levell'd roads, commodious ports,
Heav'n-climbing rocks, and trees of amplest growth.
Arising, fix'd he stood, his native soil
Contemplating, till with expanded palms

Both thighs he smote, and plaintive thus began :

Ah me ! what mortal race inhabits here ?

Rude are they, contumacious, and unjust ;

Or hospitable, and who fear the Gods ?

Where now shall I secrete these num'rous stores ?

Where wander I, myself ? I would that still

Phæacians own'd them, and some other prince,

More faithful, had receiv'd me at his board,

Who would have sent me to my native home.

Now neither know I where to place my wealth,

Nor can I leave it here, lest it become

Another's prey. Alas ! Phæacia's chiefs

Not altogether wise I deem or just,

Who have misplac'd me in another land,

Promis'd to bear me to the pleasant shores

Of Ithaca, but have not so perform'd.

Jove, guardian of the suppliant's rights, who all

Transgressors marks, and punishes all wrong,

Avenge me on the treach'rous race !—but hold—

I will revise my stores, that I may learn

What precious part purloin'd they bore away*.

* Had they been false to their charge, and placed him on a shore to which he had not directed them, the reasonable inference was, that they had also robbed him. He therefore examines his stores, not to satisfy any anxiety that he feels on their account, but to ascertain a point, which interests him much more—whether he is

So saying, he number'd carefully the gold,
 The vases, tripods bright and tissu'd robes,
 But nothing miss'd of all. Then, pacing slow
 The border of the loud-resounding Deep,
 He mourn'd his Ithaca for ever lost
 With tend'rest grief. But Pallas now approach'd.
 She seem'd a youthful shepherd, girlish fair
 In feature, such as are the sons of kings ;
 A shapely mantle and of amplest size
 Her waist enclos'd ; her nice unsullied feet
 Were sandall'd, and a javelin fill'd her hand.
 Ulysses, joyful at the sight, his steps
 Turn'd brisk toward her, whom he thus address'd.

Sweet youth ! since first of all men native here
 I thee encounter, come not with designs
 Of harm to me, but save me, and preserve
 My treasures also ; for I clasp thy knees
 With humblest suit, and pray as to a God.
 And tell me, for I much desire to learn,
 What land ? what people ? who inhabit here ?
 Is this some pleasant island, or a shore
 Of fruitful main-land sloping to the sea ?

actually in Ithaca, or not.—B. & C. And though it appears afterward, that he was still unconvinced, this is no proof, that he did not make the experiment with a hope of conviction.

Then thus the Goddess of the azure eyes :
Stranger ! thou sure art simple, or hast dwelt
Far distant hence, if of this land thou ask.
It is not, trust me, of so little note,
But known to many ; both to those who dwell
Toward the sunrise, and to others plac'd
Behind it, distant in the dusky West.
Rugged it is, not yielding level course
To the swift steed, and yet no barren spot,
However small, but rich in wheat and wine ;
Nor wants it rain or fertilizing dew,
But pasture green to goats and beeves affords,
Trees of all kinds, and fountains never dry.
Ithaca therefore, stranger, is a name
Known ev'n at Troy, a city, by report,
At no small distance from Achaia's shore.

The Goddess ceas'd ; then, toil-enduring chief,
Ulysses, happy in his native land,
(So taught by Pallas, progeny of Jove)
With unembarrass'd readiness return'd
Not truth, but figments to truth opposite,
For guile in him stood never at a pause.

The fame of Ithaca far hence I learn'd
In spacious Crete, and now, with these my stores,
Leaving behind me, for my children's use,

An equal share, have reach'd, myself, the place*.
 For slaughter of Orsilochus, I fled,
 Son of Idomeneus, a youth renown'd
 Past all for speed. His purpose was to seize
 My whole rich portion of the spoils of Troy,
 Earn'd with much toil in fight and on the Deep,
 For that I would not gratify the king,
 His father, as his servant in the field,
 Who was, myself, a chief. Him, therefore, late
 Returning from the field, in ambush plac'd
 At the way-side with a confed'rate friend,
 I wounded with my spear. It was a night
 Of such thick darkness, that unseen we watch'd
 His coming, and I slew him unperceiv'd.
 Thus, by my glitt'ring spear transpierc'd, he died,
 And I, with earnest suit, and at the cost
 Of much that I had brought from Ilium, won
 The crew of a Phæacian gallant bark,
 To bear me thence to Pylus, or the shores
 Of Elis, by the brave Epeans rul'd.
 But they, reluctant, were by violent winds
 Driv'n devious thence, for fraud they purpos'd none.
 We, therefore, wand'ring, here arriv'd by night,

* Homer dates all the fictions of Ulysses from Crete, as if he meant to pass a similar censure on the Cretans to that quoted by St. Paul—*Κρήτες δὲ ψεύσαι.*—F.

And with much difficulty push'd the ship
Into safe harbour, where, neglecting food,
Though pinch'd with hunger, we with one consent
All left the bark, and on the beach repos'd.
I, weary, slept profound, and they my goods
Forth heaving from the ship, beside me plac'd
The treasures on the sea-beach, where I slept ;
Then, leaving me disconsolate, resum'd
Their seats on board, and Sidon sought, their home.

He ceas'd ; then smil'd the Goddess azure-ey'd,
And now, in form a damsel, fair, and tall,
And well-accomplish'd, strok'd his cheek and said :

Who passes thee in artifice well-fram'd,
And in imposture various, need shall find
Of all his policy, although a God.
Canst thou not cease, inventive as thou art,
And subtle, from the wiles which thou hast lov'd
Since thou wast infant, and from tricks of speech
Delusive, even in thy native land ?
But come, dismiss we these ingenious shifts
From our discourse, in which we both excel ;
For thou of all men in expedients most
Abound'st and eloquence, and I throughout
All Heav'n have praise for wisdom and for art.
And know'st thou not thine Athenæan aid,
Pallas, Jove's daughter, who in all thy toils

Assist thee and defend? I gave thee pow'r,
 T' engage the hearts of all Phæacia's sons;
 And meet thee now, that here we may concert
 Thy future course, and I will hide the stores
 Giv'n to thee by the rich Phæacian chiefs
 On my suggestion, at thy going thence.
 By me instructed, thou shalt also learn
 What grievous troubles thou art doom'd t' endure
 In thy own house; which, since constraint enjoins,
 Bear patiently, nor either man apprise
 Or woman there, that thou hast reach'd thine home
 A wand'rer and forlorn, but silent bear
 What wrongs soever from the hands of men*.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied:
 O Goddess! Thou canst readily assume
 A thousand shapes, too various to be known
 By mortal man with ease, however wise.
 But this I know, that, while Achaia's sons
 At Ilium fought, I found thee still a friend;
 And that, those lofty tow'rs in ashes laid,

* If nevertheless Ulysses discovers himself in the sequel, unwillingly indeed to Euryclea in the first instance, but willingly to Telemachus, Eumæus, and one or two others, it appears, that he was wiser than Minerva herself, who here directs him to discover himself to nobody. The result is, says Eustathius, that, according to the proverb—*second thoughts are best*. Αἱ δεύτεραι πῶς προτιδεῖ σοφώτεραι.—C.

That shore forsaken, and the Grecian host
Divided, I beheld thee never more,
Nor once thine aid experienc'd on the Deep,
But wander'd ever with a broken heart
From shore to shore, till, wafted to the coast
Of fruitful Scherie by a Pow'r divine,
I felt thy cheering influence, and thyself
Didst guide my doubtful footsteps to the town.
But I adjure thee in thy father's name—
Speak truly—for I fear, that I have found
Some other soil, and that to sooth my pains
With pleasing fiction is thy sole design,
Are these my native rocks? and have I reach'd
Indeed my long-regretted home at last?

Then thus the blue-ey'd Goddess in return :
Such is the mind, that in thy bosom holds
Dominion ever ; therefore thy distress
Insures me still thy friend, nor can I leave,
When most he needs me, one endu'd, as thou,
With fluent speech, quick thought, and self-control.
For what man, save Ulysses, new-return'd
After long wand'rings, would not haste to see
At once his home, his children, and his wife ?
But thou, more cautious, canst endure to want
All such delights, till first thou have assay'd
Thy consort's truth, who still, as she was wont,

Abides at home, in sorrow for thy sake
Consuming night and day.—Full well I knew,
Nor doubted once, that, all thy people lost,
Thou wouldst return alone, but could not choose
T' oppose the brother of my father Jove,
Imperial Neptune, thy determin'd foe,
For his son's sake, depriv'd of sight by thee.
But know thy country now; consider well
These proofs of Ithaca, and be convinc'd.

This is the port of Phorcys, seaborne sage;
That, the huge olive at the haven's head;
Not distant far thou seest the pleasant cove
Umbrageous, to the nymphs devoted nam'd
The Naiads; who beneath its vaulted roof
Have at thy pious hands erewhile receiv'd
Many a whole hecatomb; and yonder stands
The mountain Neritus with forests cloth'd.

So saying, she chas'd the vapour, and the scene
All open'd on his view; then gladness fill'd
Ulysses' heart, long time to wo inur'd;
He kiss'd the soil, and, with uplifted hands
In fervent pray'r, the Naiads thus ador'd:

Nymphs of these rills, Jove's daughters! I despair'd,
To see you more, whom yet with happy vows
I now can hail again. Gifts, as of old,
We will hereafter at your shrines present,

If Jove-born Pallas, huntress of the spoils,
Grant life to me, and manhood to my son.

Then Pallas, blue-ey'd progeny of Jove :
Take courage ; trouble not thy mind with thoughts
Now needless. Far within this hallow'd cave
We will conceal, that thine they may remain,
These treasures, and will shape thy future course
In mutual conf'rence next, as best we may.

She spake, and deep into the gloomy vault
Descending, all its secret nooks explor'd
From side to side ; mean-time Ulysses brought
His treasures near, the gold, the temper'd steel,
And robes magnificent, his gifts receiv'd
From the Phæacians ; safe he lodg'd them all,
And Pallas, daughter of Jove ægis-arm'd,
Clos'd fast, herself, the cavern with a stone.

Then, on the consecrated olive's root
Both seated, they in consultation plann'd
The deaths of those injurious suitors proud,
And Pallas, blue-ey'd Goddess, thus began* :

Laertes' noble son, Ulysses ! think
By what means likeliest thou shalt assail
Those shameless suitors, who have now controll'd

* The olive was sacred to Pallas, who was the patroness of that tree in particular. The Goddess therefore and Ulysses, consulting together, could not have found a seat more suitable.—B. & C.

Three years thy family, thy matchless wife
With language amorous and spousal gifts
Urging importunate ; while she, with tears
Watching thy wish'd return, hope gives to all,
With messages of promise soothing each,
But frames far other purposes the while.

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd :
Ah, Agamemnon's miserable fate
Had surely met me in my own abode,
But for thy gracious warning, pow'r divine !
Come then—Devise the means ; thyself prescribe
My way to vengeance, and my soul inspire
With daring fortitude, as when we loos'd
Her radiant frontlet from the brows of Troy.
Wouldst thou with equal zeal, O Pallas ! aid
Thy servant here, I would encounter thrice
A hundred enemies, let me but perceive
Thy dread divinity my prompt ally.

Him answer'd then the Goddess azure-ey'd :
That suit I grant thee gladly ; side by side
We will achieve our glorious labour, then ;
And, trust me, those proud suitors, who consume
Thy substance now, shall stain thy marble floor,
Each with his blood, for payment of the wrong.

But come—for I will give thee now, t' elude
All human knowledge ; on thy supple limbs

The skin shall wither ; I will cause thee shed
Thy wavy locks ; I will infold thee round
In such a kirtle as the eyes of all
Shall loath to look on ; and I will deform
With blurring rheums thy eyes, so vivid erst ;
That all alike, the suitors, and thy spouse,
And thy own son shall deem thee, so disguis'd,
Some sordid wretch obscure. But seek thou first
Thy swineherd's mansion ; for his faithful heart
Still bears thee firm allegiance, and he loves
Thy consort and thy son ; the watchful swain
Now tends his herd ; they feed beneath the rock
Corax*, at side of Arethusa's fount,
On acorns dieted, nutritious food
To them, and drinking of the limpid stream.
There waiting, question him of thy concerns,
While I from Sparta, prais'd for women fair,
Call home thy son Telemachus, a guest
With Menelaus now, whom to consult
In spacious Lacedæmon he is gone,
Anxious to learn if yet his father lives.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :

* So called from a hunter of that name, who, in pursuit of his sport, fell from the summit of this rock and died. His mother Arethusa, inconsolable for his death, strangled herself. Four fountains bore her name—One in Syracuse, one in Smyrna, one in Chalcis, and this in Ithaca.—B. & C.

And why, alas ! all-knowing as thou art,
Him left'st thou ignorant ? was it that he,
He also, wand'ring wide the barren Deep,
Might suffer wo, while these his wealth devour ?

To whom the blue-ey'd Deity replied :
Grieve thou not much for him. I sent him forth
Myself, that, there arriv'd, he might acquire
Honour and fame. No suff'rings finds he there,
But in Atrides' palace safe resides,
Enjoying all abundance. Him, in truth,
The suitors watch close ambush'd on the Deep,
Intent to slay him ere he reach his home,
But those devourers of thy flocks and herds
Shall find a tomb, I doubt not, first themselves.

So saying, the Goddess touch'd him with a wand.
At once o'er all his agile limbs she parch'd
The polish'd skin ; she wither'd to the root
His wavy locks, and cloth'd him with the hide
Deform'd of wrinkled age ; she charg'd with rheums
His eyes before so vivid, and a cloak
And kirtle gave him, tatter'd both, and foul,
And smutch'd with smoke ; then, casting over all
A huge old hairless deer-skin, with a staff
She fill'd his shrivell'd hand, and gave him, last,
A wallet patch'd all over, and that, strung
With twisted tackle, dangled at his side.

Thus all their plan adjusted, diff'rent ways
They took, and she to Lacedæmon's vale
In quest of young Telemachus repair'd*.

* Here it is, as Madame Dacier observes, that the poet returns to the matter from which he has digressed ever since we quitted Telemachus at the end of the 4th book. In the nine succeeding books has been related all that befell Ulysses after his departure from Troy till his arrival in Ithaca. And it is a proof of the poet's art, she says, which merits our admiration. The action of the Odyssey was too long to be continued in a regular series.—Homer therefore has had recourse to an artificial order, beginning his poem with an enumeration of such incidents as happened last, and returning from them to others of an earlier date.

Barnes suggests, and as Clarke observes, not improperly, that this book might better conclude with the transformation of Ulysses, the two last lines of it being carried over to the beginning of the next.

ARGUMENT OF THE FOURTEENTH BOOK.

Ulysses, arriving at the house of Eumæus, is hospitably entertained,
and spends the night there.

BOOK XIV.

LEAVING the haven-side, he turn'd his steps
Into a rugged path o'er woodland heights,
Where Pallas had directed him to seek
The noble swineherd*, who of all his train
Watch'd with most diligence his rural stores.
Him sitting in the vestibule he found
Of his own airy lodge commodious, built
Amidst a level lawn. That structure neat
Eumæus, in the absence of his Lord,

* *Δῖος ὑπορῥος*.—The swineherd's was therefore in those days,
and in that country, an occupation honourable as well as useful.
Barnes deems the epithet *δῖος* significant of his noble birth.—C.

Had rais'd, himself, with stones from quarries hewn,
Unaided by Laertes or the queen.

With tangled thorns he fenc'd it safe around,
And with contiguous stakes, riv'n from the trunks
Of solid oak black-grain'd, enclos'd the spot.

Twelve pens he made within, all side by side,
Lairs for his swine, and fast-immur'd in each
Lay fifty pregnant females on the floor.

The males all slept without, less num'rous far,
Thinn'd by the princely wooers; for to them
He ever sent the fattest of his charge.

Three hundred, still, and sixty brawns remain'd.

Four mastiffs in adjoining kennels lay,
Resembling wild beasts, which himself, to guard
His herds from theft or violence, sustain'd.

There, shaping sandals to his feet he sat,
Carv'd from a colour'd hide of brightest hue,
A well-fed bullock's hide. Four hinds he kept,

Of whom three now were busied in the pens,

Or in the pasture, and a fourth had sought

The city, whither, for the suitors' use,

With no good will, but by constraint, he drove

A boar, that, sacrificing to the Gods,

Th' imperious guests might on his flesh regale*.

* Homer here describes Eumæus as the *συνώτης, ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν*,
—literally—the swineherd, prince of men. By which phrase Eusta-

The watch dogs suddenly perceiv'd him near,
 And barking ran to him ; he, well-advis'd,
 Shrank to his hams, and cast his staff afar.
 Yet, even there, hard measure had he found
 And shameful, worried, wellnigh at the door
 Of his own herdsman's house, but that the swain,
 Following his dogs in haste, sprang through the porch,
 To succour him, and, quitting, as he ran,
 The season'd hide, with threats and vollied stones
 Dispers'd them all, then thus his lord bespake :

Old man ! one moment more, and these my dogs
 Had, past doubt, worried thee, who shouldst have
 prov'd,

So slain, a source of obloquy to me*.
 But other pangs the Gods, and other woes
 To me assign, who sit lamenting here
 My godlike master, and his fatted swine

thus understands the poet to intend a person *having authority over others*, but Clarke thinks it an epithet given indiscriminately in Homer's use of it, to any man distinguished from the generality by whatsoever cause. Aware that the two images of a swineherd and a prince, in such close connexion, would have a ludicrous effect in English, the translator has omitted them.

* Plutarch observes it as a striking instance of the generosity of a mastiff, that he will not seize a person, who by his posture and manner makes it plain, that he has no design to resist. But it appears from what is said by Eumæus, that this shift of Ulysses would not have saved him, and that the dogs at last were only to be quieted by the interference of their master.—C.

Nourish for others' use, while he, perchance,
A wand'rer in some foreign city, seeks
Fit sustenance, and none obtains, if still
Indeed he live, and view the light of day.
But, old friend! follow me into the house,
That thou, at least, with plenteous food refresh'd,
And cheer'd with wine sufficient, mayst disclose
Whence thou arriv'st, and what thou hast endur'd.

So saying, the gen'rous swineherd introduc'd
Ulysses, and thick bundles spread of twigs
Beneath him, cover'd with the shaggy skin
Of a wild goat, of which he made his couch
Easy and large; the hero, so receiv'd,
Rejoic'd, and thus his gratitude express'd:

My gentle host! Jove grant thee, and the Gods
All grant thee, for this deed, thy best desire!

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
My guest! It were unjust to treat with scorn
The stranger, though a poorer should arrive
Than even thou; for all the poor that are,
And all the strangers are the care of Jove.
Little, and with good will, is all that lies
Within my scope; for servants, overaw'd
By young and haughty masters, cannot much.
My rightful lord—*his* safe return, no doubt,
The Gods have hinder'd; I had else receiv'd

From him such recompense as servants gain
From gen'rous masters, house, allotted land,
And a fair bride from many a wooer won.
For, by decree of Heav'n, much profit pays
Much labour, as my never-ceasing care
Of these evinces, yielding large increase.
Much had I, therefore, prosper'd, had my lord
Grown old at home ; but he returns no more ;
And oh ! that Helen's house had, one and all,
Died as he died, for she hath many slain,
Who, like my master, went to seek renown
For Agamemnon in the fields of Troy.

So saying, he girdled quick his tunick close,
And, issuing, sought the styes ; thence bringing two
Of the imprison'd herd, he slaughter'd both,
Sing'd them, and slash'd and spitted them, and plac'd
The whole well-roasted banquet, spits and all,
Reeking before Ulysses ; last, with flour
He sprinkled them, and, filling with rich wine
His ivy-goblet, opposite repos'd,
And thus, encouraging his guest, began :

Now, stranger, eat. A servant's homely fare
I set before thee ; for the fatted swine,
Nor fearing vengeance, nor by pity sway'd,
The suitors claim. But their injurious deeds
The blessed Gods approve not ; they respect

The just and righteous of mankind alone.
The worst and fiercest, when they seek for spoil
A foreign shore, and by consent of Jove
Seize much, their ships once laden, panic-struck,
Lest vengeance intercept them, haste away*.
But these men must have surely learn'd from Heav'n
His woful end, since neither they vouchsafe
To woo with decency, nor to depart,
Each to his home, but, destitute alike
Of shame and fear, unsparingly devour
What yet remains, now threat'ning waste of all.
Jove ne'er hath giv'n us yet the night or day,
When with a single victim, or with two,
They would content them, and his empty jars
Witness how fast the squand'ers use his wine.
Time was, when he was rich indeed; such wealth
On yonder continent no ruler own'd
Nor yet in Ithaca; no twenty chiefs
Could match with all their treasures his alone;
I tell thee their amount. Twelve herds † of his

* This passage, the true meaning of which has been much disputed, is here rendered according to the sense of it given by Clarke, who differs widely, in his interpretation of it, not only from Barnes, but from Eustathius also and Casaubon. But he differs from them much to the advantage of the observation made by Eumæus.

† Herds consisting, no doubt, of horses as well as of oxen; for the word ἀγέλη is used to express a number of either.—C.

The mainland graze* ; as many flocks of sheep ;
Droves of fat swine as num'rous ; and his friends
And hireling swains there nourish for his use
As many flocks of goats ; nor these are all,
But other goats besides, eleven flocks
Browse on the margin of his fields at home.
Myself, the while, attentive watch the breed,
Which hovel here, and ever, as they thrive,
Select, at their command, for them, the best.

While thus he spake, Ulysses ate and drank
With eager haste, but silent ; for the means
Of just revenge employ'd his ev'ry thought.
At length, his raging appetite appeas'd,
Eumæus gave him, charg'd with wine, the cup
From which he drank himself ; he, glad, receiv'd
The boon, and in wing'd accents thus began :

And who was he, my friend ! by thy report
So brave and opulent, who purchas'd thee ?
Thou say'st he perish'd for the glory-sake
Of Agamemnon. Name him ; for the Gods
Alone can tell—I may, perchance, have seen,
And may afford thee tidings of thy lord,

* It may be proper to suggest, that Ulysses was lord of part of the continent opposite to Ithaca—viz.—of the peninsula Nericus, or Leuca, which afterward became an island, and is now called Santa Maura.—F.

For I have roam'd, myself, through many a clime.

To whom the noble swineherd thus replied :

Alas, old man ! no trav'ler's tale of him

Will gain his consort's credence, or his son's ;

For wand'ers, wanting entertainment, forge

Falsehoods for bread, and wilfully deceive.

Of all such random guests, none fails to court

With feign'd intelligence the queen's regard ;

She welcomes all, and while she questions each

Minutely, from her lids lets fall the tear

Of tender grief, as well beseems a wife,

Whose mate hath perish'd in a distant land.

Thou couldst thyself, no doubt, my hoary friend !

(Would any furnish thee with decent vest

And mantle) fabricate a tale with ease ;

Yet, doubtless, dogs and fowls of rapid wing

His bones have bar'd, or fishes of the Deep

Have eaten him, and on the mainland coast

Whelm'd in deep sands the mould'ring relicts lie.

So hath he perish'd, to the long regret

Of all his friends, but most of all to mine,

For I shall find no master mild as he,

Though I should seek one even in the house

Of my own parents. Neither yearns my heart

So feelingly (though that desiring too)

To see once more my parents and my home,

As to behold Ulysses yet again.

Him though not present here, my guest! I name
With filial rev'rence; for he lov'd me much,
Car'd for me much, and, though we meet no more,
Holds still an elder brother's part in me.

Him answer'd, then, the hero toil-inur'd:
My friend! since, hopeless of thy lord's return,
Thou art thus resolute in unbelief,
I will not merely say, but I will swear
Most truly, that Ulysses comes again;
And thou shalt clothe me, soon as he arrives,
In recompense of this my gladsome news,
With a fair vest and mantle, which, although
Much needing raiment, I, till then, refuse;
For, as the gates of Hades, I detest
The sordid wretch, whom want can tempt to lie.
Be Jove, of all in Heav'n, my witness first,
Then this thy hospitable board, and last
The household Gods of the illustrious chief
Himself, Ulysses, to whose gates I go,
That all my words shall surely be fulfill'd.
In this same year Ulysses shall arrive;
Ere, this month clos'd, another month succeed,
He shall return, and punish all who dare
Insult his consort and his noble son.
To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:

Old friend ! nor cloak nor vest thy gladsome news
Will ever earn ; Ulysses comes no more.
Drink, therefore, quietly, and seek a theme
Less painful ; for recalling to my mind
My noble master, thou hast fill'd afresh
My troubled soul with sorrow for his sake.
Let the oath rest, and let Ulysses come,
Ev'n as myself, and as Penelope,
And as his ancient father, and his son
Godlike Telemachus, all wish he may.
Ay—there I feel again—nor cease to mourn
His son Telemachus ; who, when the Gods
Had rear'd him as they rear a thriving plant,
And I well hop'd, that neither in his mind
Nor person he should aught inferiour prove
To his illustrious sire, bereft, alas !
By some strange influence, human or divine,
Of all sound intellect, hath roam'd away
To Pylus, seeking information there
Of his lost father, and the suitors watch,
Mean-time, in ambush lurking, his return,
That the last hope of all Arcesias' house
May perish, and the race for ever fail.
But leave we, whether he be snar'd and slain
(Whom Jove protect !) or whether he escape,
Him also.—Now, my venerable friend !

Rehearse, with undissembling truth, the tale
Of thy own sorrows.—Whence art thou, and who?
Born in what city, from what parents sprung?
What force of well-tim'd oars impell'd the bark,
Which brought thee? Of what country were the crew?
And why, an alien, wast thou landed here?
For, not on foot thou cam'st, full well I know.

Him answer'd, then, Ulysses ever-wise :
I will with truth resolve thee; and if here
Within thy cottage sitting, we had wine
And food for many a day, and business none,
But to regale at ease while others toil'd,
I could exhaust with ease the circling year
Complete, my woes rehearsing, and at last
Leave unrehears'd large portion of the toil
And anguish, by the Gods assign'd to me.

I boast me sprung from ancestry renown'd
In spacious Crete; son of a wealthy sire,
Who rear'd a num'rous offspring at his home
Born in pure wedlock; but an humbler mate,
His purchas'd concubine, gave birth to me*.

* Eustathius, observing on this fictitious narrative of Ulysses, expresses himself thus. The poet, foreseeing that posterity would little interest itself in tales so evidently fabulous, mingles with them both historical and geographical truths, and has recourse to many other means of suitable embellishment, adorning his poem with variety of rhetorical elegance, and by every art of allurement guard-

Yet me, not less than those more nobly born,
 Castor Hylacides esteem'd and lov'd,
 For him I boast my father. Him in Crete,
 While yet he liv'd, all rev'renc'd as a God,
 So rich, so prosp'rous, and so blest was he
 With sons of highest praise. But death, the doom
 Of all, him bore to Pluto's drear abode,
 And his illustrious sons among themselves
 Portion'd his goods by lot; to me, indeed,
 They gave a dwelling, and but little more;
 Yet, for my virtuous qualities, I won
 A wealthy bride; for no degen'rate stain
 Dishonour'd *me*, nor was I known to fear
 Whatever foe, though now bereft of all.

ing it against that neglect and indifference, to which the want of truth might expose it.—C.

Ibid:—Barnes takes occasion from the first line of this speech in the original

Ἐκ μὲν Κρητῶν γένος εὐχομαι εὐρείων

to assemble a number of Homer's lines which rhyme in the same manner. Such as

Ἐκ γὰρ Ὀρέσας τίσις ἔσσεται Ἀτρεΐδης.

Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν οἴκοιο ἄναξ ἔσομ' ἡμετέροιο.

Οὐθ' Ἑρακλῆϊ, ἔτ' Εὐρύτῳ Οἰχαλιῇ.

Ἀργὼ πασιμέλυσσα, παρ' Αἴητας πλέυσσα.—C.

Rhime is therefore a more ancient invention, than it is generally supposed to have been, for it is certain, that in these instances the correspondence in sound between middle and end could not be casual. The poet, however, though he might account such a jingle not unpleasant, has practised it very sparingly.

But mark the stubble, and thou canst not much
Misjudge the grain ; in truth I have endur'd
Much tribulation ; heap'd and heavy woes.
Courage and phalanx-breaking might had I
From Mars and Pallas ; and, what time I drew,
Planning some dread exploit, an ambush forth
Of our most valiant chiefs, no boding fears
Of death seiz'd *me*, but foremost far of all
I sprang to fight, and pierc'd the flying foe.
Such was I once in arms. But household toils
Sustain'd for children's sake, and carking cares
T' enrich a family, my soul disdain'd.
My pleasures were the gallant bark, the din
Of battle, the smooth spear and glitt'ring shaft,
Objects of dread to others, but which me
The Gods dispos'd to love and to enjoy,
For diff'rent minds are diff'rently amus'd.
Ere yet the Grecian fleet had sail'd to Troy,
Nine times was I commander of a host
Embark'd against a foreign foe, and led
My valiant bands, each time, victorious home.
From the whole booty, first, what pleas'd me most
Choosing, and sharing also much by lot
I rapidly grew rich, and had thenceforth
Among the Cretans rev'rence and respect.
But when loud-thund'ring Jove that voyage dire

Ordain'd, which loos'd the knees of many a Greek,
Then to Idomeneus and me they gave
The charge of all their fleet, which how to avoid
We found not, so importunate the cry
Of the whole host impell'd us to the task.
There fought we nine long years, and in the tenth
(Priam's proud city pillag'd) sought again,
But, through dissension kindled from above,
With disunited fleets, our sev'ral homes.
Then Jove, dread Governor of all, devis'd
For me much evil. One short month alone
Giv'n to domestic pleasures, I enjoy'd
My wife, my children, and my plenteous gains,
Then suddenly resolv'd with sev'ral ships
Well-rigg'd, and furnish'd all with gallant crews,
To sail for Ægypt; nine I fitted forth,
To which stout mariners assembled fast.
Six days the chosen part'ners of my voyage
Feasted, to whom I num'rous victims gave
For sacrifice, and for their own regale.
Embarking on the seventh from spacious Crete,
And wafted by a gentle Northern gale,
We glided easily along, as down
A river's stream; nor one of all my ships
Encounter'd harm, nor any sickness seiz'd
My people, but before the friendly blast

Secure we steer'd, and, sitting, plough'd the Deep.
Five days elaps'd, my galleys nine I moor'd
All safe within the Nile's smooth-flowing stream,
And, charging my companions not to stray,
But closely guard the ships, selected some,
Who should ascend the rising-grounds, and thence
Descry the country ; but on evil bent,
And unrestrain'd by fear, these flew, at once,
To rapine ; wasted the delightful fields
Of the Ægyptians, captive brought away
Their wives and little ones, and slew the men.
The city soon alarm'd, at early dawn
Forth came the citizens, both horse and foot,
And with the splendour of their dazzling arms
Fill'd all the plain. Then Jove with panic dread
Possess'd my people ; none found courage more,
To stand, for mischiefs swarm'd on ev'ry side.
There num'rous by the glitt'ring spear we fell,
While others they conducted thence alive
To toilsome servitude. But Jove himself
Me prompted (oh that I had first expir'd
In Ægypt ! for new sorrow soon ensu'd)
To loose my brazen helmet, and to lay
My shield, put off, beside it on the ground,
To cast away my spear, and, seeking next
The chariot of the king, to clasp his knees,

And kiss them*. He, by my submission mov'd,
Deliver'd me, and, to his chariot-seat
Raising, convey'd me weeping to his home.
With many an ashen spear his warriors sought
To slay me (for they now grew fiery-wroth),
But he, through fear of hospitable Jove,
Chief punisher of wrong, my life preserv'd.
Sev'n years I there abode, and much amass'd
Among the Ægyptians, gifted by them all;
But, in the eighth revolving year, arriv'd
A shrewd Phœnician, hungry, wont to feed
His craving avarice at others' cost,
And who had injur'd many. Me, by guile,
This man seduc'd, to leave my peaceful home,
And seek with him Phœnicia, where he dwelt
And treasur'd all his gains. A year entire
His inmate I remain'd, and when the year
Its course renew'd, to Lybia, with pretence
That I should share the freight, but with design
By sale of me t' enrich himself alone,
He bore me, jealous, but constrain'd to go.
Fresh blew the North and cloudless, and the ship
Ran through the middle sea before the gale,
Soon clearing Crete. But Jove destruction plann'd
And death for them; for, Crete now left afar,

* Sethos is said to have been at that time king of Ægypt.—B. & C.

And other land than Crete appearing none,
But sky alone and sea, right o'er their heads
A gloomy cloud he brought. Black hung the storm,
And darken'd all the Deep. Then, thund'ring oft,
He hurl'd his candent bolts into the ship.
She, quaking all her length, with sulphur reek'd,
And plunging headlong o'er her shatter'd sides
Together, on the boist'rous waves the crew
Like seamews rode, forbidden by that stroke
Of wrath divine to hope their country more.
But Jove himself, that I might still survive,
Gave me, in my extreme distress, to seize
The huge unwieldy mast, to which I clung
With folded arms, and drove before the gale.
Nine days I grasp'd the beam, and, on the tenth,
The rolling billows bore me to the coast
Of the Thesprotians. There, the bounteous king,
The hero Phidon, at his proper cost
Refresh'd me ; for his own illustrious son,
Arriving where I lay with cold and toil
Wellnigh expiring, rais'd me with his hand,
And led me to his royal father's house,
Who cherish'd me, and gave me fresh attire*.

* Thesprotia was a city on the border of Thessaly, and though Ulysses here gives them a king, they are said by Thucydides to have had none.—B. & C.

There heard I of Ulysses, whom himself
Had entertain'd, he said, on his return
To his own land ; he show'd me also gold,
Brass, and bright steel, with all that in his course
Ulysses had amass'd, a store to feed
The household of a less renown'd than he
To the tenth generation, so immense
His treasures in the royal palace lay.
Of him he spake as to Dodona* gone,
T' implore Jove's counsel in his oaken bow'rs,
Whether, so late returning, he should reach
His kingdom openly, or in disguise.
To me the monarch swore, in his own hall
Pouring libation, that the ship was launch'd,
And the crew ready for his conduct home.
But me he first dismiss'd, for, as it chanc'd,
A galley of Thesprotia lay prepar'd,
To seek Dulichium, and he charg'd the crew,
That they should give me safely to the care
Of king Acastus. But with other thoughts
Their bosoms teem'd, that I might yet sustain
Mis'ries surpassing all that I had known.
For, when the bark had left the land afar,
Confed'rate with each other they conspir'd

* This oracle anciently belonged to the Thesprotians, but afterward to the Molossi.—C.

Against my liberty ; they stripp'd my vest
And mantle, and this tatter'd raiment base
Gave me instead, a tunick and a cloak
Foul past endurance, as thyself mayst see.
At eventide reaching the cultur'd coast
Of Ithaca, they left me bound on board
With tackle of the bark, and, quitting ship
Themselves, made hasty supper on the shore.
But me the Gods themselves with ease releas'd
From that constraint, and winding close my rags
Around my brows, and sliding by the smooth
And slipp'ry rudder down into the Deep,
I laid my bosom gently on the waves.
With both hands oaring thence my course, I swam
Till past all ken of theirs; then landing where
Thick covert of luxuriant trees I mark'd,
Close couchant down I lay ; they, mutt'ring loud,
Pac'd to and fro, but, deeming farther search
Unprofitable, soon embark'd again.
Thus, baffling all their search with ease, the Gods
Conceal'd, and to a wise man's cottage thence
Conducted me, ordain'd not yet to die.

To whom Eumæus answer thus return'd :
Alas, my guest ! thy wand'rings and thy woes,
Recited thus at large, have mov'd me much.
But, speaking of Ulysses, thou hast pass'd

All credence ; I at least can yield thee none.
Why, noble as thou art, shouldst thou invent
These idle falsehoods? as for the return
Of my regretted lord, myself I know,
That all the Pow'rs of Heav'n with hate pursu'd
My master ; he had else in battle died
At Ilium, or, the siege of Ilium clos'd,
In the embraces of his friends at home.
Then universal Greece had rais'd his tomb,
And he had even for his son achiev'd
Immortal glory ; but, alas ! by beaks
Of harpies torn, unseemly sight, he lies.
I live, the while, sequester'd here, and make
These herds my constant care, nor ever seek
The city, save when summon'd by the queen,
Discreet Penelope, that I may learn
New tidings, from what land soever brought.
Then all, alike inquisitive, attend,
Both who regret the absence of our king,
And who rejoice gratuitous to gorge
His substance. But propension none have I,
Or curious appetite, to such reports,
Since an Ætolian cozen'd me, who found
(After long wand'ring over various lands,
A fugitive for blood) my lone retreat.
Him here I welcom'd, and with open arms

Receiv'd, when he affirm'd, that he had seen
My master with Idomeneus in Crete
His ships refitting shatter'd by a storm,
And that in summer with his godlike band
He would return, great riches bringing home,
Or else in autumn. And thou, ancient guest
Forlorn! since thee the Gods have hither led,
Seek not to gratify me with untruths,
And to deceive me; since for no such cause
I shall respect or love thee, but alone
By pity sway'd, and for obedience-sake
To the demands of hospitable Jove.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
Thou hast, in truth, a most incred'lous mind,
Whom even with an oath I have not won,
To give me credence. Come then—we will each
Engage by cov'nant, which the Pow'rs of Heav'n
Shall witness and confirm on either part,
Thou, that if he, thy master, shall arrive
At this thy dwelling, thou shalt send me, then,
In vest and mantle decently attir'd,
Hence to Dulichium, whither I would go.
And I, thy lord not coming as I say,
That ye shall hurl me downright from the rocks,
Thou and thy servants, that in times to come
The poor and destitute may fear to lie.

To whom the gen'rous swineherd in return :
My friend ! well spoken—doubtless I should win
Immortal praise from all, for true desert
And virtue, slaying the defenceless man,
Whom I had first invited to my board,
And with great boldness I should pray to Jove*—
But the hour calls to supper, and my swains
Now seek the cottage, ready to provide
The sav'ry viands for our ev'ning fare.

Scarce had he spoken, when the swains approach'd,
Driving their herds. Within their wonted pens
They shut them fast for sleep, and hubbub wild
Of the imprison'd multitudes ensu'd.

Then call'd Eumæus to the youths aloud :
Bring ye the best, that we may set him forth,
Before my foreign friend, with whom ourselves
Will also feast, who find the stubborn race
A painful charge, while others, at no cost
Of labour, riot in the fruits of ours.

So saying, his wood for fuel he prepar'd,
And, dragging thither a well fatted brawn

* The expression is ironical, and the sentiment worthy of a poet born in more enlightened times. He who has slain his guest, says Eumæus, and is conscious of having so basely infringed the laws of hospitality, with what countenance or hope of being heard could he offer prayer to Jove the Hospitable? Homer knew, therefore, that an evil conscience is a barrier between God and man.

Of the fifth year, his servants held him fast
At the hearth-side. Nor fail'd the master swain,
T' adore the Gods (for wise and good was he),
But, consecration of the victim first
Himself performing, cast into the fire
The forehead bristles of the tusky boar,
And pray'd to all above, that safe, at length,
Ulysses might regain his native home.
Then with an oaken shive, which he had left
Beside the fire, he smote him, and he fell.
Next piercing him, and scorching close his hair,
The joints they parted, and with slices crude,
Cut neatly from the separated limbs,
Eumæus spread the caul, which, sprinkled o'er
With purest meal, he cast into the fire*.
The remnant slash'd, and spitted, and prepar'd,
They plac'd, heap'd high in chargers, on the board.
Then rose the good Eumæus to his task
Of distribution, for by none excell'd
In all the duties of a host was he.
Sev'n-fold partition of the banquet made,

* I have myself seen these ceremonies practised by Romans in my own house, and, on the ground of this single testimony, have concluded, that the people of Rome were not of barbarous origin, but Grecians assembled and associated from different districts.

Dionys. Halicarn. Antiq. Rom. lib. vii.—C.

He gave, with previous pray'r, to Maia's son*
 And to the nymphs one portion, and the guests
 Serv'd next, but, honouring Ulysses most,
 On him the long unsever'd chine bestow'd.
 By that distinction just his master's heart
 He gratified, and thus the hero spake :

Eumæus ! be thou as belov'd of Jove,
 As thou art dear to me, whom, though attir'd
 So coarsely, thou hast serv'd with such respect !

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
 Eat, noble stranger ! and refreshment take
 Such as thou mayst ; God gives, and God denies
 At his own will, for he is lord of all†.

He spake, and of the food, untasted yet,
 Part off'ring to the Gods, libation pour'd,
 And to Ulysses, town-destroying chief,
 Now seated in his place, the goblet gave.
 With bread Mesaulius serv'd them. Him the swain,

* Mercury.

† Θεός—without a relative, and consequently signifying God in the abstract, is not unfrequently found in Homer, though, fearing to give offence to serious minds unacquainted with the original, I have not always given it this force in the translation. But here the sentiment is such as fixes the sense intended by the author with a precision that leaves me no option. It is observable too, that—*δύναται γὰρ πάντα*—is an ascription of power, such as the poet never makes to his Jupiter.

Eumæus, in the absence of his lord,
Had purchas'd, aided neither by the queen
Nor the old lord, Laertes, from on board
A Taphian, at his own peculiar cost.
These rights perform'd, all stretch'd their eager hands
Toward the banquet, and, the keen desires
Of hunger sated, and the thirst of each,
Mesaulius clear'd the board, which now the hinds,
Full fed, relinquish'd willingly to seek
Their sev'ral beds. Black came a moonless night,
And Jove all night descending fast in show'rs,
With howlings of the ever wat'ry West.
Ulysses, at that sound, for trial's sake
Of his good host, if putting off his cloak
He would accommodate him, or require
That service for him at some other hand,
Addressing thus the family, began :

Hear now, Eumæus, and ye other swains,
His fellow lab'ers ! I shall somewhat boast,
By wine befool'd, which forces ev'n the wise,
To carol loud, to titter, and to dance,
And speak what oft were better far suppress'd*.

* Homer, says Athenæus, means not to censure all who laugh, or sing, or dance, for he was no clown nor of a churlish temper ; but he knew how to distinguish between things that differ, between mo-

But, since I have begun, I shall proceed,
Prating my fill. Ah might those days return,
With all the youth and strength that I enjoy'd,
When ambush'd once on Ilium's plains we lay,
Ulysses, Menelaus, and myself,
By their election, leaders of the band.
Approaching to the city's lofty wall
Through tangled bushes and the reeds that gird
The bulwarks, down we laid us in the marsh,
Beneath our arms. Then, Boreas blowing loud,
A rueful night of nipping frost ensu'd,
With snow that blanch'd us thick as morning rime,
And ev'ry shield with ice was crystall'd o'er.
The rest, with cloaks and vests well cover'd, slept
Beneath their bucklers; I alone my cloak,
Improvident, had left behind, no thought
Conceiving of a season so severe,
And cov'ring none save shield and zone had I.
The night, at length, nigh spent, and all the stars
Declining in their course, with elbow thrust
Against Ulysses' side I rous'd the chief,
And thus address'd him ever prompt to hear:

deration and excess, cheerfulness and foolish levity. He condemns therefore only such extravagances, as too much wine occasions; loud and much singing, to the weariness of the hearer, causeless laughter, and dancing without grace or measure.—C.

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd !
I freeze to death. O, help ! or I am lost.
No cloak have I ; some evil demon, sure,
Beguil'd me of all prudence, that I came
Thus sparely clad ; I shall, I must expire.

So I ; he, ready as he was in arms
And counsel both, the remedy at once
Devis'd, and in a whisper thus replied :

Hush ! lest perchance some other hear—he said ;
And, leaning on his elbow, spake aloud :

My friends ! all hear—a monitory dream
Hath reach'd me—We have left the ships afar—
Haste, therefore, one of you, with my request
To Agamemnon, sov'reign in command,
That he would reinforce us from the camp.

He spake, and at the word, Andraemon's son,
Thoas, arose, who, casting off his cloak,
Flew to the ships, and cheerful and refresh'd
The morning found me, wrapp'd in his attire.
O for the vigour of such youth again !
Then, some good peasant here would spare a cloak,
Mov'd both by friendship and respect to one,
Whom now, thus old and squalid, ye despise.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
My friend ! rehearsing thus Ulysses' praise,
Thou hast so pleas'd me, that thou shalt not find

Th' effect unpleasant to thyself. No want
Of cov'ring, therefore, or of aught beside
Needful to solace penury like thine,
Shall harm thee here; yet at the peep of dawn
Gird thy own tatters to thy loins again;
For *we* have no great store of cloaks to boast,
And, as for vests, none more than each his own.
But when Ulysses' son shall once arrive,
He will himself with mantle and with vest
Supply, and send thee whither most thou wouldst.

So saying, he rose, and nearer made his couch
To the hearth-side, well thick'ning it with skins
Of sheep and goats; then lay the hero down,
O'er whom a shaggy mantle large he threw,
Which oft-times serv'd him with a change, when rough
The winter's blast and terrible arose.

So was Ulysses bedded, and the youths
Slept all beside him; but the master-swain
Chose not his place of rest so far remote
From his rude charge, but issu'd arm'd abroad,
Gladd'ning Ulysses' heart that he had left
His herds with one so faithful to his trust.
Athwart his sturdy shoulders first he slung
His falchion bright, then wrapp'd him in a cloak
Thick-woven, winter-pro-of; a goatskin next
Of amplest size and thickest shagg'd with hair

He lifted, and a light keen javelin last,
With which he kept aloof the threaten'd force
Of dogs and men. Thus arm'd, his couch he sought
Beside the cavern, where his sleeping herds
Lay warm, and from the Northern blast secure.

ARGUMENT OF THE FIFTEENTH BOOK.

Telemachus, admonished by Minerva, takes leave of Menelaus, but, ere he sails, is accosted by Theoclymenus, a prophet of Argos, whom at his earnest request he takes on board. In the mean time Eumæus relates to Ulysses the means by which he came to Ithaca. Telemachus, arriving there, gives orders for the return of his bark to the city, and repairs himself to Eumæus.

BOOK XV.

MEAN-TIME to Lacedæmon's spacious vale
 Minerva went, that she might summon thence
 Ulysses' glorious offspring to his home*.
 Telemachus and Nestor's son she found

* The word *εὐρύχορον* has probably no other meaning than is here given it, though some commentators, not to be satisfied with what is obvious, fetch a different sense of it from afar, and suppose it to allude to a custom of the Lacedæmonians, mentioned by Plutarch, of introducing into their public feasts three chorusses or companies of singers, consisting of old men, youths, and boys. The band

In Menelaus' vestibule repos'd,
 Pisistratus in gentle sleep immers'd,
 But not the gen'rous Ithacan; his mind
 No rest enjoy'd, by filial cares disturb'd
 Amid the silent night; when, drawing near
 To his couch' side, the Goddess thus began:

Telemachus! it were a deed unwise,
 To sojourn longer here, thy fair demesnes
 Abandon'd, and those haughty suitors left
 Within thy walls; fear lest, partition made
 Of thy possessions, they consume them all,
 And in the end thy voyage bootless prove.
 Delay not; from brave Menelaus ask
 Dismission hence, that thou mayst find at home
 Thy spotless mother, whom her brethren urge*

being properly arranged, one of the seniors began his song in these words—B.

Ἄμεις ποτ' ἤμεσ ἀλκιμοὶ νεανίαι.

Stout youths in other days were we.

He was answered by one of the young men thus—

Ἄμεσ δὲ γ' ἐσμέν· αἱ δὲ λῆς, αὐγάσδεο.

Such we are now, as ye may see.

And the third song was by one of the boys, as follows—

Ἄμεσ δὲ γ' ἐσόμεσθα πολλῶ κάρρῳνες.

But we shall far superiour be.

* Apollodorus, whom Barnes cites in his note on this passage, informs us, that Icarius had by his wife Periboea, the Neïd or Naiad, five sons, Thoas, Damasippus, Imensimus, Aletes, and Perileos.—He then mentions his daughter Penelope, but takes no notice of her sister Iphthima.

And her own father even now to wed
Eurymachus, in gifts and in amount
Of proffer'd dow'r superiour to the rest.
Some treasure, else, shall haply from thy stores
Be taken, such as thou wilt grudge to spare.
For well thou know'st how woman is dispos'd ;
Her whole anxiety is to increase
His substance whom she weds ; no care hath she
Of her first children, or remembers more
The buried husband of her virgin choice.
Haste then, and to the woman of thy train,
Whom thou shalt most approve, consign the charge
Of thy domestic int'rests, till the Gods
Themselves shall guide thee to a noble wife.
This farther counsel also well deserves
Thy special notice. In the narrow frith,
Samos the rude and Ithaca between,
The chief of all thy mother's suitors wait
In closest ambush, urg'd by fierce desire
To slay thee, ere thou reach thy native shore,
But first, or I misjudge, the tomb shall hide
All those lewd revellers at thy expense.
Yet steer thy galley from those isles afar,
And voyage make by night ; some guardian God
Shall waft thee on, and watch and keep thee safe.
Then, soon as thou attain'st the nearest shore

Of Ithaca, dispatching to the town
 Thy bark with all thy people, seek at once.
 The swineherd ; for Eumæus is thy friend.
 There sleep, and to the city speed him forth
 With tidings to the queen, that thou hast pass'd
 From Pylus safely to thy native shores.

She said, and sought th' Olympian heights sublime.
 Then from sweet sleep awak'ning with his heel
 The son of Nestor, him he thus address'd :

Rise, Nestor's son, Pisistratus ! lead forth
 The steeds, and yoke them. We must now depart.

To whom the son of Nestor thus replied :
 Telemachus ! what haste soe'er we feel,
 We can by no means prudently attempt,
 To drive by night, and soon it will be dawn.
 Depart not, therefore, now, but patient wait,
 Till Menelaus, Atreus' mighty son,
 With gifts of honour in the chariot plac'd
 And kind farewell dismiss thee ; for the gifts
 Of an ungrudging host through life inspire
 His guest with thoughts of gratitude and love.

Scarce had he spoken, when, the golden dawn
 Appearing, Menelaus, from the side
 Of beauteous Helen newly ris'n, approach'd ;
 Whose coming when Telemachus perceiv'd,
 The hero, putting on his splendid vest

With brisk dispatch, and o'er his shoulders broad
Casting his graceful mantle, at the door
Receiv'd him, and his wishes thus express'd :

Atrides, Menelaus, glorious chief!

Now let it please thee, that I seek again
My native shores, for now would I depart.

Him answer'd Menelaus fam'd in arms :

Telemachus ! I will not long delay

Thy wish'd return. I disapprove alike

The host, whose assiduity extreme

Distresses, and whose negligence offends ;

The middle course is best ; alike we err,

Him thrusting forth whose wish is to remain,

And hind'ring the impatient to depart.

This only is true kindness—To regale

The present guest, and speed him when he would*.

Yet stay, till thou shalt see my splendid gifts

Plac'd in thy chariot, and till I command

My women from our present stores to spread

The table with a plentiful repast.

For both the honour of the guest demands,

And his convenience also that he eat

* The treatment, says Ælian, which the swallow receives at the hands of man, is conformable to the rule of hospitality prescribed by Homer. We make him welcome while he stays, and permit him to depart when he pleases.—B. & C.

Sufficient, ent'ring on a length of road.
But wouldst thou travel, so that I would share
Myself thy journey, through the midst of Greece,
I will conduct thee drawn by steeds of mine
To many a city, and from none of all
Ungifted shall we go, but shall in each
Some boon receive, a charger, it may chance,
Or brazen tripod, or a golden cup,
Or, fitly match'd, two mules, a sturdy pair.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
Atrides, Menelaus, chief renown'd !
I would at once depart (for guardian none
Of my possessions have I left behind),
Lest, while I seek my father, I be lost
Myself, or lose what I should grudge to spare.

Which when the valiant Menelaus heard,
He bade his spouse and her attendant maids
Set forth at once refreshments on the board,
Such as their present stores might well supply.
Then Eteoneus came, Boetheus' son,
Newly aris'n, for nigh at hand he dwelt,
Whom Menelaus charg'd to kindle fire,
By which to dress their food, and he obey'd.
He next himself his fragrant chamber sought,
Not sole, but by his spouse and by his son
Attended, Megapenthes. There arriv'd

Amidst his choicest treasures, he produc'd
Himself a goblet first, and next consign'd
An argent beaker to the prince's hand.
Mean-time beside her coffers Helen stood
Fill'd with rich mantles, variegated works
Of her own hand. The mantle of them all
Widest and most magnificent, a star
In splendour, and which lay below the rest,
The beauteous spouse of Menelaus chose,
And all, proceeding through the palace, sought
Telemachus again, whom reaching, thus
The hero of the golden locks began :

May Juno's mate, the Thund'rer, such return
Grant thee, Telemachus, as thou desir'st!
Behold, I give thee from my precious stores
The richest and the noblest treasure there—
I give thee this bright beaker, argent all,
But round encircled with a lip of gold.
It is the work of Vulcan, which to me
The hero Phædimus presented, king
Of the Sidonians, when, on my return,
Beneath his roof I lodg'd. I make it thine*.

So saying, Menelaus in his hands
The goblet plac'd, and Megapenthes next

* See the Fourth Book, where this cup is promised.

The beaker set before him. Last of all
Helen the mantle brought, and thus she said :

Accept, my son, this also. Seeing this,
Call me to mind who wove it, and present
This mantle, in the joyful nuptial hour,
To thy fair bride, reposing it, the while,
In thy own mother's keeping. Now, farewell !
Prosp'rous and happy be thy voyage home !

She spake, and gave it to him. He the boon
Receiv'd with gladness, and his noble friend,
Pisistratus, within the chariot-chest
Dispos'd the sev'ral gifts. This done, their host,
The glorious Menelaus, to his hall
Led them again, where each his former seat,
Exalted throne, or softer couch, resum'd.
A maiden then, with golden ewer charg'd
And silver bowl, pour'd water on their hands,
And spread the polish'd table, which with food
Various, selected from her present stores,
The mistress of the household charge supplied.
Boethus' son stood carver, and to each
His portion gave, while Megapenthes, son
Of glorious Menelaus, serv'd the cup.
Then all with outstretch'd hands the feast assail'd,
And when nor hunger more nor thirst they felt,
Telemachus and Nestor's noble son

Then join'd the rapid steeds, and, mounting, drove
Through vestibule and sounding porch abroad.
Forth issu'd also, bearing in his hand
A golden goblet of delicious wine,
The hero of the golden locks; resolv'd,
That not without libation first perform'd
They should depart; he stood before the steeds,
And drinking first, thus, courteous, them bespake:

Health to yourselves, my children! and I wish
Much health (so tell him) to my glorious friend,
The hoary Nestor, ever, while we warr'd
At Ilium, as a father kind to me.

To whom Telemachus discreet replied:
And doubtless so we will; nor aught suppress
Of all thy gracious words, or bounteous deeds,
Arriv'd in Pylus; and I would to Heav'n
That, reaching home, I might as sure report
All to my father there, as I have found
Beneath thy roof much friendship, and depart
Enrich'd with many a noble gift by thee!

While thus he spake, on his right hand appear'd
An eagle; in his talons pounc'd he bore
A white-plum'd goose domestic, newly ta'en
From the house-court. Men, women, all alike,
With shouts pursu'd him; but the fearless bird,
Approaching first the chariot, on the right,

And close before it, sprang into the skies.
That sight rejoicing and with hearts reviv'd
They view'd, and thus Pisistratus his speech
Amid them all to Menelaus turn'd :

Now, Menelaus, think, illustrious chief!
If us, this omen, or thyself regard.

While warlike Menelaus musing stood
What answer fit to frame, his spouse mean-time,
Fair Helen, thus preventing him, began :

Hear me ; for I will answer as the Gods
Teach me, and as I think shall come to pass.
As he, descending from his place of birth,
The mountains, caught our pamper'd goose away,
So shall Ulysses, after num'rous toils
And wand'rings, punish all his foes at home,
Perhaps sits framing, even now, the means
Of due revenge, arriv'd already there.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
Juno's loud-thund'ring spouse confirm the word !
And I will worship thee as we adore
The Gods themselves, with sacrifice and praise.

He said, and lash'd the coursers ; fiery they,
And fleet, sprang through the city to the plain.
Thus, journeying, they shook on either side
The yoke all day, and when the setting sun
To dusky ev'ning had resign'd the roads,

At Pheræ they arriv'd, and at the house
Where dwelt Diocles, whose illustrious sire,
Orsilochus, from Alpheus sprang, repos'd.
But when Aurora, daughter of the Dawn,
Look'd rosy forth, then, binding to the yoke
Their steeds again, they mounted. Nestor's son
Urg'd through the vestibule and sounding porch
His willing coursers, and the lofty tow'rs
Of Pylus soon they saw ; when thus his friend,
Pisistratus, Ulysses' son bespake :

What words, Pisistratus ! shall I employ,
That may prevail, to win thy kind consent
To my request ? The friendship that descends
From sire to son, Jove's ordinance, is ours.
Our years are equal, and this journey, last,
Shall serve t' endear us mutually the more.
Me bear not, I conjure thee, noble friend !
Beyond the ship, but drop me where she lies,
Lest ancient Nestor, though against my will,
Detain me in his palace through desire
To feast me, for I dread the least delay.

He spake ; then mus'd Pisistratus how best
He might effect the wishes of his friend,
And thus at length resolv'd ; turning his steeds
With sudden deviation to the shore,
He sought the bark, and, placing in the stern

Both gold and raiment, the illustrious gifts
Of Menelaus, thus, in accents wing'd
With ardour, urg'd Telemachus away :

Dispatch, embark, command thy crew on board,
Ere my arrival notice give of thine
To the old king ; for vehement I know
His temper, neither will he let thee hence,
But, hasting hither, will himself enforce
Thy longer stay, lest thou depart the coast
Ungifted ; nought will fire his anger more.

He ended, lash'd his steeds, the city sought,
And soon arriv'd at home. Mean-time, his crew
Exhorting, thus Telemachus exclaim'd :

My comrades ! fix the mast, extend the sail,
And climb the bark, for I would now return.

He spake ; they heard him gladly, and at once
All fill'd the benches. While his voyage he
Thus expedited, and beside the stern
To Pallas sacrifice perform'd and pray'd,
A stranger, born remote, who had escap'd
From Argos, fugitive for blood, a seer,
And of Melampus' progeny, approach'd.
Melampus, in old time, in Pylus dwelt,
Mother of flocks, alike for wealth renown'd
And the magnificence of his abode.
He, flying mighty Neleus, first of men,

Exchang'd his country for a foreign land,
And Neleus occupied his ample means
A year complete, possessing them by force.
Melampus in the house of Phylacus
Endur'd, mean-time, imprisonment and wo,
And burn'd with wrath for Neleus' daughter's sake*
By fell Erynnis kindled in his heart.
But, scaping death, he drove the lowing beeves
From Phylace to Pylus, well aveng'd
His injuries at Neleus' hands sustain'd,
And gave to his defrauded brother's armst†,
King Neleus' daughter fair, the promis'd bride.
To steed fam'd Argos next he bent his way,
There mark'd by Fate t' inhabit and to rule
Achaia's num'rous people. In that land
He married, built a palace, and became
The father of two valiant sons, by name

* Her name was Pero.—C.

Iphiclus, the son of Phylacus, had seized and detained cattle belonging to Neleus; Neleus ordered his nephew Melampus to recover them, and as security for his obedience seized on a considerable part of his possessions. Melampus attempted the service, failed, and was cast into prison; but at length escaping, accomplished his errand, vanquished Neleus in battle, and carried off his daughter Pero, whom Neleus had promised to the brother of Melampus, but had afterward refused her.—B.

† His brother's name was Bias.—B. & C.

Antiphates and Mantius. To the first
 Was born Oicleus; from Oicleus sprang
 Amphiaraüs, warlike chief renown'd,
 Whom with all tenderness, and as a friend,
 Alike the Thund'rer and Apollo priz'd*;
 Yet reach'd he not the bounds of hoary age,
 But, by his mercenary consort's arts
 Urg'd thither, died at Thebes†. Two sons he left,
 Alcmaeon and Amphiloehus; and two,
 Left also Mantius, of undying fame,
 Clytus and Polyphides. Clytus pass'd
 From Earth to Heav'n, and dwells among the Gods,
 Stol'n by Aurora for his beauty's sake.
 But (brave Amphiaraüs once deceas'd)
 Phoebus exalted Polyphides far
 Above all others in the prophet's part.
 He, anger'd by his father, roam'd away
 To Hyperesia, where he dwelt renown'd
 Throughout all lands, the oracle of all.

His son, nam'd Theoclymenus, was he

* As a royal character he was beloved by Jupiter. All such were therefore called *διογενέες* and *διοτρεφέες*—and as a prophet he was dear to Apollo.—C.

† His wife Eryphyle, bribed by Polynices, persuaded him, though aware that death awaited him at that city, to go to Thebes, where he fell accordingly.—B. & C.

Who now approach'd ; Ulysses' son he found
Libation off'ring in his bark, and pray'r,
And in wing'd accents ardent him address'd :

Sir ! since I find thee sacrificing here,
By these most hallow'd rites, and by the Gods,
And as thou liv'st thyself, and hop'st the lives
Of these thy people, I conjure thee, solve
My questions speedily, nor hide the truth.
Who art thou ? whence ? where born ? and sprung
from whom ?

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
I will inform thee, stranger ! and will solve
With truth thy questions. Ithacan by birth
I boast myself, and from Ulysses sprung.
But he, alas ! hath reach'd a woful end,
And I, believing it, with these have plough'd
The Ocean hither, int'rested to learn
A father's fate, long absent from his home.

Then answer'd godlike Theoclymenus :
I also wander, and must leave afar
My native home ; for I have slain a chief
Of my own tribe in Argos ; num'rous friends
And kinsmen had he there, and far and wide
Their pow'r extends. A dreadful death I fear
From their resentment, and have therefore fled,
Doom'd never to return. But thou receive

Thy suppliant, and afford me in thy bark
A refuge, for I deem them near at hand.

Then answer thus Telemachus return'd :
Fear not lest I refuse thee. Welcome share
My voyage, and in Ithaca receive
Such entertainment as myself enjoy.

He spake, and at the stranger's hand his spear
Accepting, laid it kindly on the deck,
Then climb'd himself the bark, and, in the stern
His seat resuming, plac'd him at his side.
The moorings loos'd, Telemachus aloud
Exhort'd all his followers to the task
Of preparation. They with brisk dispatch
The pine-mast heaving, in the central beam
Infix'd it, and at stern and prow secur'd
The tighten'd cords ; then, straining at the thongs
Of twisted hide, unfurl'd the shining sail.
Fair wind, through cloudless ether blowing fresh,
Minerva sent them, that the bark might run
Her nimblest course through all the briny way.
Now sank the sun, and dusky ev'ning dimm'd
The waves, when, driven by propitious Jove,
She reach'd the length of Pheræ ; thence she stretch'd
To sacred Elis, where the Epeans rule,
And through the sharp Echinades pursu'd
Her rapid course, him bearing doubtful still

Of life or death, surprisal or escape*.

Mean-time Ulysses and the swineherd ate
Their cottage-mess, and the assistant swains
Theirs also; and when hunger now and thirst
Had ceas'd in all, Ulysses thus began,
Proving the swineherd, whether friendly still,
And anxious for his good, he would entreat
His stay, or hasten him to seek the town:

Eumæus, hear me, and let these thy friends
Hear also. Much desire I feel to seek
At early dawn the city, there to beg,
Lest I distress you. But afford me, first,
Needful instructions, and a trusty guide,
Who may conduct me thither; there my task
Must be to roam the streets, and to obtain,
From whom I may, the mendicant's reward,
A little bread, and a few drops to drink.
Ulysses' palace I shall also seek,
And to discreet Penelope report
My tidings; neither shall I fail to mix
With those imperious suitors, who, themselves
Full-fed, may spare perhaps some boon to me.

* Those islands of the Echinades are intended, which were near
to the opening of the bay of Corinth and the mouth of the Achelôüs.
—C.

Me shall they find, in whatsoe'er they wish,
Their ready servitor, for (understand
And mark me well) the herald of the skies,
Hermes, from whom all actions of mankind
Receive their grace and polish, is my friend,
So that in menial offices I fear
No rival, whether I be call'd to heap
The hearth with fuel, or dry wood to cleave,
To roast, to carve, or to distribute wine,
As oft the poor are wont, who serve the great.

To whom, Eumæus, at those words displeas'd,
Thou didst reply: Gods! how could such a thought,
My guest! possess thee? surely thou design'st
Thy own destruction, purposing to seek
Those suitors, and to mingle with a throng,
Whose impious riots echo to the skies.
Them no such servitors attend, as thou,
But youths well-cloak'd, well-vested; sleek their heads,
And smug their countenances; such alone
Are their attendants, and the polish'd boards
Groan overcharg'd with bread, with flesh, with wine.
Rest here content; for neither me nor these
Thou weariest aught, and when Ulysses' son
Shall come, he will with vest and mantle fair
Attire, and send thee whither most thou wouldst.

To whom, Ulysses, hero toil-inur'd:

I wish thee, O Eumæus ! dear to Jove
As to myself, for whom thy friendly care
Provides, that I shall cease, henceforth, to roam
A wretched mendicant ; for anguish none
Can equal his, who strays by famine urg'd,
And fears and trembles wheresoe'er he strays.
Since thou detain'st me then, and bidd'st me wait
His son's arrival, tell me—lives the sire
Of brave Ulysses still, whom here he left
Declining fast into the vale of years ?
And lives his mother ? or have both deceas'd
Already, and descended to the shades ?

To whom the master swineherd thus replied :
Hear then, my guest ! the truth. Laertes lives,
But importuning Jove with ceaseless pray'r
For speedy riddance of a weary life ;
Such pangs he suffers for his absent son,
And for the consort of his early choice,
Whose death so wrung his heart, that wither'd age
Invaded him, or ere its date arriv'd.
She died of sorrow for her glorious son,
And died deplorably ; may never friend
Of mine, or benefactor die as she* !
While yet, though worn with mis'ry, she surviv'd,

* She is said to have hanged herself.—B. & C.

With her conversing I could oft abate
 My troubles much ; for in my childish days
 She cherish'd me, and such maternal care,
 Or hardly less, than for her youngest-born,
 The princess Ctimena* she felt, vouchsaf'd
 Continually to me. With her I grew
 To riper years, and when we both attain'd
 Our blooming youth, they gave her to a chief
 Of Samos, who repaid the precious gift
 With countless dow'r. But me, first well-supplied
 With sandals, mantle, vest, she bade forsake
 Ulysses' palace for the distant field,
 Yet lov'd me, so sequester'd, still the more.
 I miss her kindness now ; but gracious Heav'n
 Makes useful to myself my labours here ;
 Hence have I food, and hence I drink, and hence
 Refresh, sometimes, a worthy guest like thee.
 But neither gracious word nor bounteous deed
 Can reach me now from her who rules us all,
 So is the house infested with the plague
 Of that lewd throng. Glad would my servants† be,

* Sister of Ulysses.—B. & C.

† It seems plain, though unnoticed, I believe, either by translators or commentators, that by δμῶνες in this place Eumæus intends his own servants ; for the servants of the suitors are out of the question, and male servants belonging to the household and dwelling in the palace it no where appears that there were any.

To reach their mistress' ear, and from herself
Her pleasure learn; beneath the royal roof
To drink and eat, and bring a portion home;
For gift and grant make heaviest labour light.

Then answer thus, Ulysses wise return'd:
Alas! good swain, Eumæus, how remote
From friends and country wast thou forc'd to roam
Ev'n in thy childish days! But tell me true.
The city where thy parents dwelt, did foes
Despoil it? or else did some hostile band
Surprising thee alone, on herd or flock
Attendant, bear thee with them o'er the Deep,
And sell thee at this hero's house, who paid
Doubtless for *thee* no sordid price or small?

To whom the master swineherd in reply:
Stranger! since thou art curious to be told
My story, silent listen, and thy wine
At leisure quaff. The nights are longest now,
And such as time for sleep afford, and time
For pleasant conf'rence; neither were it good,
That thou shouldst seek thy couch or ere the time,
Since even sleep is hurtful in excess*.
And is there here whom weariness o'erwhelms

* To sleep too long makes us resemble more the dead than the living: Æschines de Somno.—C.

For excess in sleep is in its very nature unfriendly both to our

With slumber now, let such a one retire,
 And, on the morrow, let him eat betimes
 His mess, and drive my master's herd abroad.
 But we, with wine and a well-furnish'd board
 Supplied, will solace mutually derive
 From recollection of our suff'rings past ;
 For who hath much endur'd, and wander'd far,
 Finds the recital ev'n of sorrow sweet ;
 Now, therefore, hear, for I will tell thee mine*.

There is an island (thou hast heard, perchance,
 Of such an isle) named Syria† ; it is plac'd
 Above Ortygia, and a dial owns
 True to the tropic changes of the year‡.
 No great extent she boasts, yet is she rich

minds and bodies, and to our performance of the various duties of life. While we sleep we are of no more consequence than the dead. But he who wishes life indeed, and is chiefly concerned to acquire wisdom, will keep himself as much as possible awake, considering such a practice as more than any thing essential to his well-being. Plato de Legib. Lib. vii.—C.

* It is pleasant to recollect the past; not only such things as pleased us at the moment, but even the unpleasing, if our condition has since changed for the better. The reason is, that not to be afflicted is, itself, a comfort. Aristotle's Rhet. Lib. i. C. ii.—C.

† Not improbably the isthmus of Syracuse, an island, perhaps, or peninsula at that period, or at least imagined to be such by Homer. The birth of Diana gave fame to Ortygia.—F.

‡ "Οθι τροπαὶ ἡελίοιο.—The translator has rendered the passage according to that interpretation of it, to which several of the best

In cattle and in flocks, in wheat and wine.
No famine knows that people, or disease
Noisome, of all that elsewhere seize the race
Of miserable man ; but when old age
Steals on the citizens, Apollo, arm'd
With silver bow and bright Diana come,
Whose gentle shafts dismiss them soon to rest.
Two cities share between them all the isle,
And both were subject to my father's sway,
Ctesius Ormenides, a godlike chief.
It chanc'd that from Phœnicia, fam'd for skill
In arts marine, a vessel thither came
By sharpers mann'd, and laden deep with toys.
Now in my father's family abode
A fair Phœnician, tall, full-siz'd, and skill'd
In works of elegance, whom they beguil'd.
While she wash'd linen, on the beach, beside
The ship, a certain mariner of those
Seduc'd her ; for all women, ev'n the wise
And sober, feeble prove by love assail'd.
Who was she, he inquir'd, and whence ? nor she
Scrupled to tell at once her father's home.

I am of Sidon*, famous for her wealth

expositors incline. Nothing can be so absurd as to suppose, that Homer, so correct in his geography, could mean to place a Mediterranean island under the tropic.

* A principal city of Phœnicia.

By dying earn'd*; from Arybas I sprang,
 Rich Arybas. Me Taphian pirates stole
 Returning from the field, and, hither borne
 On board their galley, sold me to the chief
 Of all this island, in whose house I dwell.

Then answer thus her paramour return'd :
 Fly now with us, and thou shalt see again
 Thy parents in their own high-roof'd abode ;
 For still they live, and still are wealthy deem'd.

To whom the damsel : Even that might be,
 Would ye, ye seamen, by a solemn oath
 Assure me of a safe conveyance home.

Then swear the mariners as she requir'd,
 And she, their oath completed, spake again :

Now, silence ! no man, henceforth, of you all
 Accost me, though he meet me on the road,
 Or at yon fountain ; lest some busy tongue
 Report it in my ancient master's ear,
 Who, with suspicion touch'd, may *me* confine
 In cruel bonds, and death contrive for *you*.
 But be ye close ; provide your stores in haste ;

* Πολυχάλας in this place is understood by the scholiast to signify the same as πλεσιας ; and with good reason ; for in Sidon were no workers in brass, but many dyers, the purple found there being in the highest estimation, and the people enriched by it accordingly.—B. & C.

And when your vessel shall be freighted full,
Quick send me notice ; for I mean to bring
What gold soever opportune I find,
And will my passage cheerfully defray
With still another movable. I nurse
The good man's son, an urchin shrewd, of age
To scamper at my side ; him will I bring,
Whom at some foreign market ye shall prove
Saleable at what price so'er ye will.

So saying, she to my father's house return'd.
They spent the year complete, their vessel's hold
Storing with purchas'd goods of every kind,
And when, that task perform'd, they needed nought
But to return, their messenger arriv'd,
To summon down the woman to the shore.
Then, ent'ring at my father's palace gate,
An artist, such he seem'd, for sale produc'd
Beads of bright amber, rivetted in gold.
My mother (then at home) with all her maids
Handling and gazing on them with delight,
Propos'd to purchase them, and he the nod
Significant gave unobserv'd the while
To the Phœnician woman, and return'd.
She, thus admonish'd, caught my yielding hand
And led me forth. The tables and the cups
Left by the lords, my father's daily guests

And followers, in the vestibule she found ;
For they, my sire attending, had with him
The crowded forum sought. Three cups she seiz'd,
Which to her bosom nimbly she convey'd,
And bore them off. An unsuspecting child
I pac'd beside her. Ev'ning now embrown'd
The winding paths, and we, with hasty steps
Descending to the port, erelong arriv'd
Where the wide-sail'd Phœnician galley lay.
They plac'd us both, then, ent'ring, swiftly cleav'd
Their liquid road, by favourable gales,
Jove's gift, impell'd. Six days we day and night
Continual sail'd, but when Saturnian Jove
Now bade the sev'nth bright morn illumine the skies,
Then shaft-arm'd Dian struck the woman dead.
She headlong pitch'd at once into the bilge
Like a sea-coot ; whence heaving her again,
The seamen gave her to be fishes' food,
And I surviv'd to mourn her. But the winds
And rolling billows bore them to the coast
Of Ithaca, where with his proper goods
Laertes purchas'd me ; and thus it chanc'd,
That e'er I saw this isle, my present home.

To whom Ulysses, glorious chief, replied :
Eumæus ! thou hast mov'd me much, thy woes
Enumerating thus at large. But Jove

Hath neighbour'd all thy evil with this good,
That after num'rous sorrows thou hast reach'd
The house of a kind master, at whose hands
Thy sustenance is sure, and here thou lead'st
A tranquil life; but I have late arriv'd,
City after city of the world explor'd.

Thus mutual they conferr'd, nor leisure found
Save for short sleep, by morning soon surpris'd.
Telemachus, mean-time, approaching land,
His gallant friends at once cast loose the sail,
Lower'd the mast, and oar'd the vessel in.
Her anchors heav'd aground*, and hawsers tied
Secure, themselves, forth-issuing on the shore,
Breakfast prepar'd, and charg'd their cups with wine.
When neither hunger now, nor thirst remain'd
Unsatisfied, Telemachus began :

Push ye the sable bark without delay
Home to the city. I will to the field
Among my shepherds, and, my rural works
Survey'd, at eve will to the town return.
To morrow will I set before you wine
And plenteous viands, wages of your toil.

Then godlike Theoclymenus inquir'd :
Whither must I, my son? whose house, of all

* The anchors were lodged on the shore, not plunged as ours.

The chiefs in Ithaca, shall me receive?
Shall I directly to the queen's and thine?

Then thus Telemachus, discreet, replied:
I would invite thee to proceed at once
To our abode, since nought should fail thee there
Of kind reception, but it were a course
Unsafe for thee, since elsewhere I must seek
Myself a lodging now, nor will the queen,
My mother, see thee, for she rarely leaves
Her own retirement, but, the suitors' eyes
Avoiding, sits continual at the loom.
But thou mayst safely seek another chief,
By name Eurymachus, the noble son
Of Polybus, whom all, with one consent,
In all our island, rev'rence as a God.
Far nobler than the rest is he, and seeks
More ardent than his rivals far, to wed
My mother, and to fill my father's throne.
But long or e'er those nuptials shall arrive,
A day, perchance, with direst evil fraught
Shall find them all.—The Thund'rer only knows.

To him thus speaking, on the right appear'd
Apollo's chosen messenger, a swift
High-soaring falcon*; in his talons clasp'd

* The Ægyptians seem to have consecrated the hawk to Apollo, whom in their language they name Orus; for they affirm, that the

A dove he bore, and, as he pluck'd the prey,
Between the youthful hero and his bark
Pour'd like a show'r her plumage to the ground.
Then, calling him apart, the prophet seiz'd
His benefactor's hand, and thus he said :

Think not, Telemachus ! that by the Gods
Unguided, and by chance, this bird hath ta'en
A flight thus hopeful. Soon as I perceiv'd,
I knew him ominous—In all the isle
No family of a more royal note
Than yours is found, and yours shall still prevail.

Then answer thus Telemachus return'd :
Fail not this word of thine, my friend ! and soon
I will enrich thee so, that all who meet,
Or but behold thee, shall pronounce thee blest.

Then, to Piræus thus, his friend approv'd :
Piræus, son of Clytius ! (for of all
My followers to the shore of Pylus, none
More prompt than thou hath my desires perform'd)
Now also to thy own abode conduct
This stranger, whom with hospitable care
Cherish and honour till myself arrive.

hawk visits him ; an opinion founded on the nature of the bird, which delights to soar aloft, and has, of all others, the steadiest and most undazzled sight when the sun shines with brightest splendour. *Ælian de Animal. Lib. x, c. 14.—C.*

To whom Piræus, gallant youth, replied :
Telemachus ! however long thy stay,
Punctual I will attend him, and no want
Of kindest welcome shall he find with me.

So saying, he climb'd the ship, then bade the crew,
Embarking also, cast the moorings loose,
And each obedient to his bench repair'd.
Mean-time Telemachus his sandals bound,
And lifted from the deck his glitt'ring spear.
Then, as Telemachus had giv'n command,
Son of divine Ulysses, casting loose
The moorings, forth they push'd into the Deep,
And sought the city, while, with nimble pace
Proceeding thence, the youthful hero sought
The cottage, where Eumæus, friend sincere
To both his masters, watch'd his num'rous charge.

ARGUMENT OF THE SIXTEENTH BOOK.

Telemachus dispatches Eumæus to the city, to inform Penelope of his safe return from Pylus; during his absence, Ulysses makes himself known to his son. The suitors, having watched for Telemachus in vain, arrive again at Ithaca.

BOOK XVI.

AT early dawn, Ulysses and his host,
Kindling the cottage fire, their food prepar'd,
And sent the peasants with their herds abroad.
The watch-dogs, while Telemachus approach'd,
Bark'd not, but fawn'd around him. At that sight,
And at the sound of feet, now drawing nigh,
Ulysses in wing'd accents thus remark'd :
Eumæus ! some familiar friend of thine,
Or other whom thou know'st, is on his way

Toward us, for thy dogs bark not, but fawn
Around him ; and his steps now strike mine ear.

Scarce had he ceas'd, when his own son himself
Stood in the vestibule. Upsprang at once
Eumæus wonder-struck, and letting fall
The cups in which he then sat mingling wine,
Flew to his youthful lord, and, weeping, kiss'd
His hands, his forehead, and his radiant eyes.
As when a father folds in his embrace
Arriv'd from foreign lands in the tenth year
His darling son, the offspring of his age,
His only one, for whom he long hath mourn'd,
So kiss'd the noble peasant o'er and o'er
Godlike Telemachus! as one escap'd
From instant death, and, plaintive, thus he spake :

Light of my eyes, thou com'st ; it is thyself,
Sweetest Telemachus ! whose safe return
From distant Pylus hopeless seem'd to me.
Enter, my son ! that I may feast my mind
With contemplation of so dear a guest,
Arriv'd so newly from a foreign shore.
Thy farm delights not thee ; we seldom share
Thy presence ; thee it pleases most to dwell
In the throng'd city, witnessing the waste
And havock made by thy voracious foes.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :

My gentle father ! I will oft'ner see
Thy face hereafter ; and I now arrive
For that same purpose, and from thee to learn,
If still my mother occupy content
Her wonted home, or, by some other chief
At length espous'd, have left Ulysses' bed
Untenanted, and of no future use,
To be by noisome spiders webb'd around.

To whom the master-swineherd in return :
Not so, she, patient still as ever, dwells
Beneath thy roof, but all her cheerless days
Despairing wastes, and all her nights in tears.

So saying, Eumæus at his hand receiv'd
His brazen lance, and o'er the step of stone
Enter'd Telemachus ; at his approach
His seat Ulysses hastily resign'd,
Which thus, replacing him, his son refus'd :

Guest, keep thy seat ; our cottage will afford
Some other, which Eumæus will provide.

He spake, and, as he bade, Ulysses sat.
Then, with green twigs beneath, and skins above,
Of thickest fleece, a seat Eumæus rais'd,
And down sat young Telemachus. His board
With viands, remnants of the former day,
He furnish'd next, and heaping high with bread
His baskets, charg'd an ivy-cup with wine,

And opposite to his illustrious lord
Ulysses sat. Toward the ready feast
Their hands they stretch'd, and (hunger now and thirst
Both satisfied) Telemachus, his speech
Addressing to their gen'rous host, began :

My father! whence this stranger-guest of thine,
And wherefore here arriv'd? what country boast
The mariners on board whose bark he came?
For none on foot comes hither, well I know.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
My son! with truth thy questions I resolve.
He boasts him sprung from ancestry renown'd
In spacious Crete, and hath the cities seen
Of various lands, by fate ordain'd to roam.
Ev'n now, from a Thesprotian ship escap'd,
He reach'd my cottage—but I yield him thine.
Accept the gift; deal with him as thou wilt;
He is thy suppliant, and depends on thee.

Then thus, Telemachus, discreet, replied :
Thy words, Eumæus! fill me with distress.
For, say, what guest or stranger can abide
Secure beneath my roof? myself am young,
Nor yet of strength sufficient to repel
An offer'd insult, and my mother's mind
In doubtful balance hangs, if, still with me
An inmate, she shall manage my concerns,

For her first husband's sake, and for the sake
Of her own good report, or shall espouse
The noblest of her wooers, and the best
Entitled by the splendour of his gifts*.
But I will give him, since I find him lodg'd
Beneath thy roof, a mantle and a vest,
A two-edg'd sword, and sandals for his feet,
With convoy to the country of his choice.
But let it please thee to detain him still
An inmate here, and I will hither send
Such raiment as he needs, nor shall he want
Due sustenance, but shall from me receive
Of all sorts, lest he burden thee and thine.
For where the suitors come, there shall not he
With my consent, nor stand expos'd to pride

* This hesitation and uncertainty of purpose, which the prince here imputes to his mother, Spondanus understands to be inconsistent with what is said by Minerva in the beginning of the preceding book, concerning the urgency with which she was pressed by her father and her brethren to wed Eurymachus. The learned critic charges Telemachus on this account either with forgetfulness of the information given him by Pallas, or with want of faith in it; and adds, that on the whole there is an incongruity between the passages, which seems altogether unpardonable. But he is well answered by Clarke, who observes, that in the fifteenth book Penelope is not said by Pallas to have *herself* made up her mind on the subject, and to have resolved to marry Eurymachus, but merely to be *much importuned by her kindred* to do so. The inconsistency therefore is nowhere but in the imagination of Spondanus.

And petulance like theirs, lest by some sneer
They wound him, and, through him, wound also me;
For little is it, that the boldest can
Against so many; numbers will prevail.

Him answer'd then Ulysses toil-inur'd:
Dear youth! since even I may freely speak,
Ye rend my tortur'd soul, while ye relate
The crimes, with which those suitors dare infest
A prince's mansion, amiable as thou.—
Is thy submission choice? or have the words
Of some consulted oracle inclin'd
All hearts against thee? canst thou charge the blame
On faithless kindred? for we boldly trust
A kinsman, even in the fiercest field?
O that myself had youth as I have will,
Or that renown'd Ulysses were my sire,

* * * * *

Might some brave alien strike me to the ground

† The Greek line—

Ἔλθοι ἀλητεύων (ἔτι γὰρ καὶ ἐλπίδος αἴσα)

being for very cogent reasons rejected from this place by Eustathius, and by Clarke also, as serving only to confuse the sense, though I had translated it in the first edition, I have here omitted.

It was probably, as Clarke observes, transferred hither by some unskilful copyist from Book xix, 84, where it occurs with a little difference.

That moment headless, if I fail'd at once,
To seek those plund'ers in the royal house,
And to avenge my suff'rings on them all.
And should I wage an unsuccessful fight
Alone with many, rather would I die
At my own home, than witness evermore
Their unexampled deeds, guests shov'd aside,
Maidens dragg'd forcibly from room to room,
Casks emptied of their rich contents, and them
Indulging glutt'nous appetite day by day
Enormous, without measure, without end.

To whom, Telemachus, discreet, replied:
My guest! thy questions I with truth resolve.
Me no consulted oracle hath doom'd
To popular dislike, nor have I cause
Of false and faithless kindred to complain,
For Jove hath from of old with single heirs
Our house supplied; Arcesias none begat
Except Laertes, and Laertes none
Except Ulysses, and Ulysses me
Left here his only one, ere yet of age
To recompense his love from whom I sprang*.

* Valuable and sensible children will not only love each other the more for the sake of their common parents, but their parents likewise for the sake of each other; esteeming it not the least of the many obligations they owe them, that they have given them

Thence comes it that our palace swarms with foes*;
 For all the rulers of the neighbour isles,
 Samos, Dulichium, and the forest-crown'd
 Zacynthus, others also rulers here
 In craggy Ithaca, my mother woo,
 And day and night all riot at my cost.
 For while she neither can at once reject
 Their hated offers, nor imagine means
 Of clear deliv'rance from them, they devour
 Mean-time my substance, and will also soon
 Myself destroy, but Heav'n disposes all.

Eumæus! haste, my father! bear with speed
 News to Penelope, that I am safe,
 And have arriv'd from Pylus; I will wait
 Till thou return; and well beware that none

brothers. Homer, therefore, has with great propriety introduced Telemachus complaining of it as a misfortune belonging to his family, to have one son only. Plutarch de Fraterno amore.—C.

* Clarke here adduces the following lines from Oppian's *Halieutica*, Lib. iii, v. 358.

Ὡς δ' ὅπότε ὀρφανικοῖο μετ' ἡϊθέοιο μέλαθρον
 Οὔτι σαοφροσύνησι μεμηλότες ἤλικες ἄλλοι
 Κλητοὶ τ' αὐτόμολοι τε πανήμεροι ἡγερέθονται,
 Κτῆσιν αἰεὶ κείροντες ἀσημάντοιο δόμοιο.

As when beneath some noble orphan's roof
 Call'd and uncall'd his fellow-striplings swarm,
 The whole day long, and, scorning to abstain,
 Diminish ceaseless his unmanag'd means——

Hear thee beside, for I have many foes.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
It is enough. I understand. Thou speak'st
To one intelligent. But say beside,
Shall I not seize th' occasion, as I go,
With the same joyful tidings to console
Distress'd Laertes ? who, while yet he mourn'd
Ulysses only, could o'ersee the works,
And dieted among his menials oft
As hunger prompted him ; but now, they say,
Since thy departure to the Pyliau shore,
He neither eats as he was wont, nor drinks,
Nor oversees his hinds, but sighing sits
And weeping, wasted even to the bone.

To whom Ulysses' offspring in return :
Hard though it be, yet to his tears and sighs
Him leave we now. We cannot what we would.
For were the course and order of events
At our control, it were the foremost wish
Of all our hearts, to see my sire's return.
Thou, therefore, wander not from field to field
In quest of him, but, once thy message told,
Speed home again, and let the queen dispatch
Her secretly, in whom she most confides,
Charg'd with thy tidings for the senior's ear.

He said, and urg'd him forth, who, binding on

His sandals, to the city bent his way.
Nor went Eumæus from his cottage forth
Unmark'd by Pallas, but the Goddess came,
In semblance an accomplish'd damsel, fair
And of majestic mien ; before the gate
Her stand she took. Ulysses from within
Beheld her, but Telemachus, his son,
Discern'd her not ; for Pow'rs divine reveal
Their presence in whose sight soe'er they please.
Ulysses, therefore, and Eumæus' dogs
Alone descried her, and the affrighted hounds
Bark'd not, but whin'd, and hid them where they might.
She beckon'd him ; he saw the gracious sign
Intelligent, and issuing through the court
Before her stood, when thus the Goddess spake :
 Laertes' progeny, for wiles renown'd !
No longer from thy son his sire withhold,
But speak thee plainly such ; then planning here
Destruction first for all your foes at home,
Haste to the city, where ye shall not want
My presence long, for I desire the fight.
 Minerva spake, and with her rod of gold
Touch'd him ; his mantle first and vest she made
Pure as new-blanch'd ; dilating next his form,
She gave dimensions ampler to his limbs ;
Swarthy again his manly hue became,

Round his full face, and black his bushy chin.
The change perform'd, Minerva disappear'd,
And the illustrious hero turn'd again
Into the cottage; wonder at that sight
Seiz'd on Telemachus; askance he look'd,
Awe-struck, not unsuspicious of a God,
And in wing'd accents eager thus began :

Thou art no longer whom I lately saw,
Thy vesture was not such, nor wore thy cheeks
This healthful hue. The wond'rous change bespeaks
A Deity, and thou descend'st from Heav'n.
O smile on us, that we may yield the rites
Acceptable, and bring thee golden gifts
Elaborate; ah spare us, Pow'r divine!

To whom Ulysses, hero toil-inur'd :
I am no God. Why deem'st thou me divine*?
I am thy father, for whose sake thou lead'st
A life of wo, by violence oppress'd.

So saying, he kiss'd his son, while from his cheeks
Tears trickled, tears till then perforce restrain'd.
Telemachus (for he believ'd him not
His father yet) thus, wond'ring, spake again :

My father, said'st thou? no. Thou art not he,

* A line which, as Plutarch observes, might serve as a proper answer to a flatterer.—C.

But some Divinity beguiles my soul
With mock'ries, to afflict me still the more ;
For never mortal man could so have wrought
By his own pow'r ; some interposing God
Alone could render thee both young and old ;
For old thou wast of late, and foully clad,
But wear'st the semblance now of those in Heav'n !

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied :
Telemachus ! it is not well, my son !
That thou shouldst greet thy father with a face
Of wild astonishment, and stand aghast.
Ulysses, save myself, none comes, be sure.
Such as thou seest me, num'rous toils achiev'd,
And woes sustain'd, I visit once again
My native country in the twentieth year.
This wonder Athenæan Pallas wrought,
She cloth'd me even with what form she would,
For so she can. Now poor I seem and old,
Now young again, and clad in fresh attire.
So easy is it to the Pow'rs above,
T'exalt or to debase a mortal man.

So saying, he sat. Then threw Telemachus
His arms around his father's neck, and wept.
Pangs of soft sorrow not to be suppress'd
Seiz'd both ; in murmur'd sounds of tend'rest tone
They breath'd it forth, more piteous than the bird

(Eagle, or hook-nail'd vulture), from whose nest
Some swain hath stol'n her yet unfeather'd young.
So they their cheeks with big round drops of wo
Bedewing stood, nor had the setting sun
Cessation of their weeping seen, had not
Telemachus his father thus address'd :

What ship convey'd thee to thy native shore,
My father ! and what country boast the crew ?
For, that on foot thou not arriv'dst, is sure.

To whom his long-afflicted sire replied :
My child ! I will inform thee. Learn the truth.
Conducted by Phæacia's gallant sons
I came, a race accusom'd to convey
Strangers, who visit them, across the Deep.
Me, o'er the billows in a rapid bark
Borne sleeping, on my native shores they laid,
Enrich'd with many a precious gift, with brass,
With tissu'd raiment, and with store of gold,
Which, warn'd from Heav'n, in caves conceal'd I left,
And by suggestion of Minerva sought
This cottage, where I will, with thee, concert
Fit means to punish our voracious foes.
Now, therefore, sort and sum them ; I would know,
Both whence they come, and their united force,
That next I may consult my dauntless heart,
If we alone may match them, and contend

Ourselves with all, or must have aid beside.

Then, answer thus his son, discreet, return'd:
My father! I have ever heard thee prais'd
For wisdom, and for matchless might in arms,
But with astonishment this word of thine
O'erwhelms me. Can so many and so brave
Be match'd by two alone? for neither ten
Are they, nor twenty, but more num'rous far.
Learn now their numbers. Fifty youths and two
Came from Dulichium; they are chosen men,
And six attendants follow in their train;
From Samos twenty youths and four arrive;
Zacynthus also of Achaia's sons
Sends twenty more; and Ithaca supplies,
Herself, twelve nobles. Medon also waits
On these, the herald, and the bard divine,
With other two, for culinary skill
Selected, and to dress the sumptuous board*.
Should we within the palace, we alone,
Assail them all, I fear lest thy revenge
And thy return alike disastrous prove
And bitter to thyself. But recollect—

* The suitors according to this reckoning were in number one hundred and eight, with eight servants beside the herald and the bard; in all one hundred and eighteen.—B. & C.

Think, if thou canst, on whose confed'rate arm
Strenuous in our behalf we may rely.

To him replied his patient father bold :
I will inform thee. Mark. Weigh well my words.
Will Pallas with the glorious Sire of all
Suffice us ? or demands the desp'rate fight
More strenuous aids, and mightier still than they ?

Then answer thus Telemachus return'd :
Good friends indeed are they, whom thou hast nam'd,
Though thron'd above the clouds : for their control
Is universal both in Earth and Heav'n.

To whom Ulysses, toil-worn chief renown'd :
Not long will they the glorious strife decline,
When once within my palace shall be tried
Whose might in arms surpasses, theirs or ours.
But thou, departing at the dawn of day,
Rejoin those haughty suitors, and, erelong,
Eumæus me shall to the city lead
In form a miserable beggar old.
And should they with dishonourable scorn
Insult me, patient thou my wrongs endure ;
Or should they even drag me by the feet
Abroad, or smite me with the spear, thy wrath
Refraining, gently counsel them to cease
From such extravagance ; but well I know,

That cease they will not, for their hour is come*.
 And mark me well; repose what now I say
 Deep in thy soul. What time Minerva's self
 Shall prompt me to it, shaking then my brows
 I will admonish thee; thou, so appris'd,
 Remove what arms so'er thou find'st below,
 And in the chamber's close recess above
 Secure them, and with feign'd composure say,
 When, missing them, the suitors ask the cause,
 I have but further plac'd them from the smoke;
 For they appear no longer those which erst
 Ulysses, going hence to Ilium, left,
 So smirch'd and sullied by the breath of fire.
 This weightier reason (thou shalt also say)
 Some God suggested to me—lest, inflam'd
 With wine, ye wound each other in your brawls,
 Shaming both feast and courtship; for the view
 Itself of arms incites to their abuse.
 Yet leave two falchions for ourselves alone,

* Ulysses not only curbs his own indignation, but, understanding by his son's discourse, that he too is indignant, and by nature hostile to profligate and wicked persons, his also. For as we bridle not the horse while he runs, but before he starts, so likewise, before we conduct those who are of hot and fiery temper to the public games, we prepare them for the contest with wholesome counsel and precaution.

Plutarch. de audiend. Poetis.—C.

Two bucklers, and two spears, which we will seize
With sudden force, and Pallas and her Sire
Their hearts shall fill with womanish dismay.
Hear also this, and hold the caution fast.
If thou indeed be mine, by true descent
Ulysses' offspring, of my safe return
Let none hear news from thee ; no, not my sire
Laertes, nor Eumæus, nor of all
Our menials any, nor herself the queen,
That thou and I, alone, may search the drift
Of our domestic women, and may prove
Our serving men, who rev'rences and fears,
And who contemns us both, but chiefly thee
So gracious, and so worthy to be lov'd*.

Him then thus answer'd his illustrious son:
My father ! Thou shalt understand, I trust,
Hereafter, that thy genuine son am I,
Nor want a manly mind. But I account
Thy purpos'd course unlikely to avail

* All these directions concerning the removal of the weapons were rejected from this place by the ancients, and apparently with good reason ; for when they occur again in Book XIX, this instruction relating to the arms to be left is not mentioned, neither when they actually remove them do the hero and his son leave any. Dacier and Barnes however justify the insertion of these precepts here, but Clarke would expunge them. Their inconsistency with the sequel seems to warrant it.

Thyself or me; for, I entreat thee, think
How tedious were it, at thy sev'ral farms
To visit all the servants, proving each,
And the proud suitors merciless devour
Mean-time thy substance, nor abstain from aught*.
Learn, if thou wilt (and I that course myself
Advise), who slights thee of the female train,
And who is guiltless; but I would not try
From house to house the men, far better prov'd
Hereafter, if, in truth, propitious signs
From Heav'n have promis'd thee the Thund'rer's aid†.

Thus they conferr'd. The gallant bark, mean-time,
Reach'd Ithaca, which from the Pylian shore
Had brought Telemachus with all his band.
Within the many-fathom'd port arriv'd,

* For Ulysses had servants not only in Ithaca, but on the continent, who could not be visited and put to the proof individually but at the cost of much time.—C. The advice of Telemachus therefore is good, and the poet recommends him by it to our respect, as a son worthy of so wise a father.

† If you are not secure of the divine assistance, which you have so confidently professed to expect, then indeed it may be necessary to make trial of the man-servants, and to avail yourself of the aid of those, whom you shall find faithful among them. Otherwise, to put the women to the proof may be sufficient; and how they are disposed toward you, you will readily discover, since they are always on the spot. This will be a prudent measure, and to this, therefore, I make no objection.

His lusty followers hal'd her far aground,
Then bore their armour homeward, but the gifts,
A splendid store, to Clytius' house convey'd.
Next to the royal mansion they dispatch'd
A herald, charg'd with tidings to the queen,
That, safe return'd, Telemachus had sought
Eumæus' cottage, and the bark had sent
Home to the city ; that the matchless dame,
Reliev'd from needless fear, might cease to mourn.
They then, the herald and Eumæus, both
Charg'd with one message, meeting, in the court
Of their illustrious lord together stood,
And, while the women compass'd him around,
The herald said—Telemachus, O queen,
Thy son, is safe, and even now arriv'd.
Eumæus, next approaching her, rehears'd
His message also from her son receiv'd,
And, all his errand punctually perform'd,
Leaving the palace, sought his home again.

Then were the suitors troubled, and with hearts
Dejected, issuing through the exterior court,
All sat before the porch, when thus the son
Of Polybus, Eurymachus, began :

My friends ! The daring boy, although we deem'd
This voyage such as he could ne'er achieve,

Hath yet perform'd it. Send we, therefore, forth
A bark of prime repute, her benches fill'd
With stout and skilful rowers, who shall haste
To summon those successless watchers home.

Scarce had he said, when, turning where he sat,
Amphinomus beheld a bark arriv'd
Just then in port; he saw them furling sail,
And seated with their oars in hand; he laugh'd
Through pleasure at that sight, and thus he spake:

Our message may be spar'd. Lo! they arrive.
Some God perhaps inform'd them, or they saw,
Themselves, it may be, the returning bark
Too swiftly passing to be reach'd by theirs.

He spake; they, rising, landed on the beach.
Alert they drew the sable bark aground,
And by his servant each his arms dispatch'd
To his own home. Then all to council close
Assembling, neither elder of the land
Nor youth allow'd to join them, and the rest,
Euphites' son, Antinoüs, thus bespake:

Ah! how the Gods have rescu'd him! all day
Perch'd on the airy mountain-top, our spies
Successive watch'd; and, when the sun declin'd,
We never slept on shore, but still from eve
To dawn of morning plough'd the vast abyss,
Hoping Telemachus; that we might seize

And slay him; but his happier fortune him
Had mean-time guided to his native shore.
Now, therefore, seated here, contrive we means
For his destruction, such as must prevail;
For never, while *he* lives, shall we obtain
Our purpos'd end, so subtle is he grown,
And the whole city now are on his side.
Come, then—prevent him, ere he call the Greeks
To council; for he will not long delay,
But will excite their anger, and will tell
Amid them all, how we in vain devis'd
His death; a deed which they will scarce applaud,
But, for our punishment, will drive us forth
Perhaps, to wander in some foreign land.
Prevent him, therefore, quickly; in the field
Slay him, or on the road; so shall his wealth
And his possessions on ourselves devolve,
Which we will share in common, but his house
Shall be the queen's, and his whom she shall wed.
If this displease you, and ye rather choose,
That he should live and occupy entire
His patrimony, then no longer here
Assembled let us revel at his cost,
But let the nuptial gift of each, produc'd,
Plead for him, and the queen that prince espouse,
Who proffers most, and whom the fates ordain.

He ceas'd ; the assembly silent sat and mute.
Then rose Amphinomus amid them all,
Offspring renown'd of Nisus, son, himself,
Of king Aretias. Chief was he of all
The suitor train, who from the pleasant isle
Dulichium had arriv'd, and by his speech
Most pleas'd Penelope, for he was mild
And prudent, and his counsel thus propos'd:

Far from my bosom be the wish, my friends !
To slay Telemachus ; the royal race
Is sacred, and may not be lightly slain.
First, therefore, ask we counsel from above,
For should the mighty Thund'rer in reply
Commend your purpose, I will then advise
Myself his death, and help you ; but if He
Give unpropitious answer, then forbear.

So spake Amphinomus, whom all approv'd.
Arising then, into Ulysses' house
They went, where each his splendid seat resum'd.

Penelope, mean-time, resolv'd to appear
Before the ruthless suitors, whose design
To slay her son from Medon she had learn'd,
The herald, for his ear had caught the sound.
Toward the hall with her attendant train
She mov'd, and when, most graceful of her sex,
Where sat the suitors she arriv'd, between

The columns of the stately dome she stood,
And, cov'ring with her white veil's lucid folds
Her lovely features, to Antinoüs spake :

Antinoüs, pitiless, injurious prince !
The people deem thee wise, and thou art held
Worthier than all of equal age, to rule
Their councils ; but such worth was never thine.
How hast thou dar'd profanely to infringe
Jove's host-protecting ord'nance, and to scheme,
In his own house, the slaughter of my son ?
Know'st not, that hither erst thy father fled,
Fearing the people furiously incens'd
By wrongs, which he, with Taphian robbers join'd,
Had done to the Thesprotians, our allies ?
They would have rent him piecemeal, and have made
His plentiful possessions all their own,
But that Ulysses check'd them, and repress'd
Their fierce revenge, whose kindness thou repay'st
Wasting his wealth ; soliciting his wife ;
Slaying his son ; and, me t' afflict the more,
Enacting all these mischiefs for my sake.
But cease, I charge thee, and bid cease the rest.

To whom the son of Polybus replied,
Eurymachus :—Icarius' daughter wise !
Take courage, fair Penelope, and chase
These fears unreasonable from thy mind !

The man lives not, nor shall, who, while I live,
And faculty of sight retain, shall harm
Thy son Telemachus. For thus I say,
And thus will I perform; his blood shall stream
A sable current from my lance's point
That moment; for the town-destroying chief
Ulysses, oft, me placing on his knees,
Hath fill'd my infant grasp with sav'ry food,
And giv'n me ruddy wine. I, therefore, hold
Telemachus of all men most my friend,
Nor hath he death to fear from hand of ours.
But when the Gods shall doom him, die he must.

So he encourag'd her, who yet, himself,
Plotted his death. She, reascending, sought
Her stately chamber, and, arriving there,
Deplor'd with tears her long-regretted lord,
Till Athenæan Pallas softly bath'd
Her closing eyelids with the dew of sleep.

And now, at eventide, Eumæus reach'd
Ulysses and his son. A yearling swine
Just slain they skilfully for food prepar'd,
When Pallas came, and, smiting with her wand
Ulysses, wither'd his whole form again,
And made his vesture sordid as before,
Lest, knowing him, the swain at once should seek
Penelope, and let the secret forth.

Then foremost him Telemachus address'd :
 Noble Eumæus ! thou art come ; what news
 Bring'st from the city ? Have the warrior band
 Of suitors, hopeless of their ambush, reach'd
 The port again, or wait they still for me ?

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
 No time for such inquiry, nor to range
 The city-streets had I, but anxious wish'd
 To make my message known, and to return.
 But, as it chanc'd a nimble herald, sent
 From thy companions, met me on the way,
 Who reach'd thy mother first. Yet this I know,
 For this I saw. Passing above the town,
 Where they have pil'd a way-side hill of stones
 To Merc'ry*, I beheld a gallant bark
 Ent'ring the port, a num'rous band she bore

* Mercury, having by command of Jupiter slain Argus the keeper of Iö, was brought into judgement by Juno and the other deities, as the first of their order, who had defiled himself with the blood of a mortal. His judges, however, fearing lest they should offend Jupiter, if they condemned him, since in the execution of Jupiter's commands he had perpetrated the deed, acquitted him of the murder, but at the same time testified their abhorrence of the act, pelting him with their pebbles of suffrage, till they lay in a heap at his feet. It is therefore customary for travellers, because Mercury presides over the public ways, and is the tutelary God of all who use them, to raise heaps of stone to his honour, every passenger contributing to them as he goes ; and these heaps they call *ἔρμαιες λόφους*, or hills of Mercury. The story is cited from Anticlides.—B.

Of youths, all warriors, who with shields and spears
Of glitt'ring point had stor'd her to the brim.
Theirs I conjectur'd her, and could no more.

He spake; and, by Eumæus unperceiv'd,
Telemachus his father ey'd and smil'd.
Their task accomplish'd, and the table spread,
They ate, nor any his due portion miss'd;
And, hunger now and thirst both sated, all
To rest repair'd, and took the gift of sleep.

ARGUMENT OF THE SEVENTEENTH BOOK.

Telemachus returns to the city, and relates to his mother the principal passages of his voyage; Ulysses, conducted by Eumæus, arrives there also, and enters among the suitors, having been known only by his old dog Argus, who dies at his feet. The curiosity of Penelope being excited by the account which Eumæus gives her of Ulysses, she orders him immediately into her presence, but Ulysses postpones the interview till evening, when, the suitors having left the palace, there shall be no danger of interruption. Eumæus returns to his cottage.

BOOK XVII.

NOW look'd Aurora from the East abroad,
When the illustrious offspring of divine
Ulysses bound his sandals to his feet,
Seiz'd his strong spear well-fitted to the grasp,
And, ere he sought the city and his home,
His friend and host Eumæus thus bespake :

Father! I seek the city, to convince
My mother of my safe return, whose tears
I judge, and lamentation shall not cease,
Till she behold me. But I ask from thee
This service; introduce into the town,
Thyself, this hapless guest, that he may beg
Provision there, a morsel and a drop
From such as may, perchance, vouchsafe the boon.
I cannot, vex'd and harass'd as I am,
Feed all, and should he deem such treatment hard,
The worse for him. Plain truth is my delight.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
My youthful friend ! I would, myself, depart.
Better the mendicant in cities seeks
His dole, vouchsafe it whosoever may,
Than in the villages. No longer young,
I could not labour hard, nor all perform
That it might please a master to command.
Go then, and when I shall have warm'd my limbs
Before the hearth, and when the risen sun
Shall somewhat chase the cold, thy servant's task
Shall be to guide me thither, as thou bidd'st.
For this is a vile garb ; the frosty breath
Of morning would benumb me thus attir'd,
And, as ye say, the city is remote.

He ended, and Telemachus in haste

Set forth, his thoughts all teeming as he went
With dire revenge. Arriving at his home
He pass'd the threshold, enter'd, and reclin'd
His lance against a column of the dome.
Him Euryclea first, his nurse, perceiv'd,
While on the variegated seats she spread
Their fleecy cov'ring; swift with tearful eyes
She flew to him, and the whole female train
Of brave Ulysses swarm'd around his son,
Clasping him, and his forehead and his neck
Kissing affectionate; then came, herself,
As golden Venus or Diana fair,
Forth from her chamber to her son's embrace,
The chaste Penelope; with tears she threw
Her arms around him, his bright-beaming eyes
And forehead kiss'd, and with a murmur'd plaint
Maternal, in wing'd accents thus began:

Light of these eyes, thou com'st, it is thyself,
Dearest Telemachus! whose safe return
I never hop'd, when once thou hadst embark'd
For Pylus, secretly and well-assur'd
Of my dissent, news seeking of thy sire.
But speak of Nestor, and describe at large
The welcome shown thee by the Pylian sage.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied:
My mother! spare to grieve me, nor afflict

Thy son still sore distress'd, although escap'd,
So newly, from a death which seem'd so sure.

Go, bath'd and habited in fresh attire,
To thy superiour chamber, where arriv'd
With thine attendant women, vow to Jove
And to the Gods whole hecatombs, in hope
Of just revenge by their effectual aid.

I seek the forum, there to introduce
A guest, my follower from the Pylian shore,
Whom, sent before me with my gallant friends,
I bade Piræus kindly entertain
At his own house, till I should visit mine.

He spake, nor flew his words unmark'd away.
She, bath'd and habited in fresh attire,
Sought her superiour chamber, where arriv'd
With all her female train, to Jove she vow'd
And to the Gods whole hecatombs, in hope
Of just revenge by their effectual aid.

Then, spear in hand, went forth her son, two dogs
Fleet-footed following him. O'er all his form
Pallas diffus'd a dignity divine,
And ev'ry eye gaz'd on him as he pass'd.
The suitors throng'd him round, joy on their lips
And welcome, but deep mischief in their hearts.
He, shunning all that multitude, a seat
Soon found, where Antiphus and Mentor sat

And Halitherses, from their earliest days
His father's friends, and for that cause his own,
Who question'd him of all that he had seen.
And now Piræus, leading through the town
His guest, approach'd the council, whom the prince
Soon greeted, and as soon Piræus said—

Sir! send thy menial women, to bring home
The precious charge committed to my care,
Thy gifts at Menelaus' hands receiv'd.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
Piræus! wait; we know not where will end
These troubles. Should I from the suitors' hands
Receive a death-wound privately at home,
And leave my substance to be shar'd by them,
I rather wish those treasures thine, than theirs.
But should I with success for them devise
A bloody death, then, wing'd with joy, thyself
Bring home those presents to thy joyful friend.

He said, and introduc'd his anxious guest
Into the royal mansion. There arriv'd,
Each on his throne or couch his mantle cast;
Bath'd in the polish'd vase; his limbs bedew'd
With limpid oils, and, by the women serv'd
With splendid vest and fleecy mantle warm,
Stepp'd from the bath, and sought his couch again.
A maiden next, with golden ewer charg'd,

And silver bowl, pour'd water on their hands,
And spread the polish'd table, which with food
Of all kinds, furnish'd from the present store,
The cat'ress of the royal house supplied.
Mean-time, beside a column of the dome
His mother, on a couch reclining, twirl'd
Her slender threads. They to the furnish'd board
Stretch'd forth their hands, and, hunger now and thirst
Both satisfied, Penelope began :

Telemachus ! I will ascend again,
And will betake me to my mournful bed,
Bath'd ever with my tears, since, following hence
The sons of Atreus to the Trojan shore,
Ulysses left it ; for our haughty guests
Now fill the court again, and still thou keep'st
The hope of his return, if thou have heard
Such tidings, cruelly conceal'd from me.

Her answer'd then Telemachus discreet :
My mother ! Learn the truth. We reach'd the shores
Of Pylus. There, the venerable chief,
Nestor, receiv'd me to his royal home,
And with such welcome as a father shows
To his own son, long lost and newly found,
Such kindness Nestor and his noble sons
Vouchsaf'd to me. But never had he learn'd
From mortal lips, he said, my father's fate,

If still he live, or have already died.
He, therefore, sent me to the Spartan court
With steeds and chariot of his own, t' inquire
Of warlike Menelaus. There I found
Helen of Argos, by the will of Heav'n
Auth'ress of trouble both to Greece and Troy*.
At once the valiant Menelaus ask'd,
What cause had urg'd me to the pleasant vale
Of Lacedæmon; plainly I rehears'd
The whole occasion, and he thus replied:

Ye Gods! they are ambitious of the bed
Of a brave man, however base themselves.
But, as it chances when the hart hath laid
Her fawns, new-yea'n'd and sucklings yet, to rest
In some resistless lion's den, she roams,
Mean-time, the hills, and in the grassy vales
Feeds heedless, but the lion, to his lair
Returning, rends them both; with such a force
Resistless shall Ulysses them destroy.

* It is an observation of Eustathius, that Telemachus, retaining a grateful sense of Helen's kindness to him in his late visit, ascribes the troubles, which she had caused, not to any imprudence or criminality in her, but to the decree of Heaven. It is certain, that, when she speaks of herself as the occasion of those calamities to both nations, she attempts no such apology; from her we should not have accepted it; but, however insufficient, it is at least graceful, when made by Telemachus.—C.

Jove! Pallas! and Apollo! O that such,
 As erst in well-built Lesbos, where he threw
 Philomelides* in a wrestling-match
 With mighty force, when all the Greeks rejoic'd,
 Ulysses now might mingle with his foes!
 Short life and bitter nuptials should be theirs.
 But now such answer as with earnest suit
 Thou hast implor'd, direct and true, receive.
 For I will nought conceal, but will impart
 All that the ancient Prophet of the Deep†
 Hath taught me, with exactest truth to thee.
 The God declar'd, that he had seen thy sire
 Guest of the nymph Calypso; by constraint
 Her guest, and from his native land withheld
 By sad necessity, for ships well-oar'd
 Or faithful followers hath he none, whose aid
 Might speed him safely o'er the spacious flood.
 So Menelaüs spake, whom, thus inform'd,

* The English reader is requested to observe, that the last syllable but one of this name is to be pronounced *long*.

There have been disputes concerning the person signified by it, some contending, that Patroclus is meant, the son of Philomela. But, beside that Homer never derives his patronymics from the name of the mother, it is not likely, that the fall of a person, so beloved by the Greeks as Patroclus was, should have occasioned universal joy among them.—B. & C. It is more probable, therefore, that some Lesbian is intended.—See the note on L. 422 of Book IV.—C.

† Proteus.

At once I left, and, favour'd by the Gods
With prosp'rous gales, soon reach'd my native home.

He spake ; and tumult in his mother's heart,
So speaking, rais'd. Consolatory, next,
The godlike Theoclymenus began :

O blameless consort of Laertes' son !
Little the Spartan knew ; but list to me,
For I will plainly prophesy and sure.
Be Jove of all in Heav'n my witness first,
Then this thy hospitable board, and last
The household Gods of the illustrious chief,
Ulysses, at whose hearth * I have arriv'd,
That, ev'n now within his native isle,
From some obscure retreat Ulysses views
These foul enormities, himself unseen,
And plans complete destruction for them all.
So sure an augury, while in my place
On board the gallant bark I sat, appear'd,
Which I aloud expounded to thy son.

Then answer, thus, Penelope return'd :
Fail not this word of thine, my friend ! and soon
I will enrich thee so, that all who meet,
Or but behold thee, shall pronounce thee blest.

Thus they conferr'd. Mean-time the suitors hurl'd

* The hearth was the altar, on which the lares or household-gods were worshipped.

The quoit and lance on the smooth area spread
Before Ulysses' gate, the custom'd scene
Of their contentions, sports, and clamours rude.
But when the hour of supper now approach'd,
And from the pastures on all sides the sheep
Came with their wonted drivers, then exclaim'd
Medon, the herald beyond all the rest
Their fav'rite, and who waited at the board—

Enough of play, young princes! leave the court,
That we may dress our ev'ning fare within,
Since in well-tim'd refreshment harm is none.

He spake, whose admonition pleas'd. At once
All, rising, sought the palace; there arriv'd,
On couches or on thrones their cloaks they spread,
And, with a fatted ox, sheep, goats, and brawns
Of hugest size stretch'd lifeless on the floor,
Hasten'd the banquet; nor with less dispatch
Ulysses and Eumæus now prepar'd,
To seek the town, when thus the swain began:

Since then, my friend! obedient to the will
Of my young lord, thou hast resolv'd to seek
The distant town, although I wish thee much
My fellow-lab'rer here, yet, lest he chide,
Whose sharp reproof would grieve me and distress,
Haste, let us hence. Day verges to a close,

And soon the breath of eve will chill thee more.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :

It is enough. I understand. Thou speak'st

To one intelligent. We will depart,

And lead, thyself, the way ; but give me first,

If thou have one well-season'd and at hand,

A staff to lean on, for ye speak the road

A rugged one, and dang'rous to the foot.

So saying, his tatter'd wallet o'er his back

He cast, suspended by a leathern twist,

Eumæus gratified him with a staff,

And forth they went, leaving the cottage kept

By dogs and swains. He city-ward his king

Led on, in form a squalid beggar old,

Halting, and in unseemly garb attir'd.

But when, slow-travelling the craggy way,

They now approach'd the town, and had attain'd

The marble fountain deep, which with its streams

Pellucid all the citizens supplied

(That fountain Ithacus had fram'd of old,

With Neritus and Polyctor, over which

A grove of water-nourish'd alders hung,

Encircling it around, while cold the rill

Ran from the rock, on whose tall summit stood

The Naiads' altar, whom no trav'ller fail'd,

Come whence he might, to worship ere he pass'd*).
Melantheus, son of Dolius, at that fount
Met them ; the chos'n goats of ev'ry flock,
The suitors' destin'd supper, from the field
He drove, two swains assisting him. The churl,
Them seeing, in rude accents, such as fir'd
Ulysses with resentment, thus began :

Ay—this is well—The villain leads the vile—
Thus evermore the Gods join like to like.
Thou clumsy swineherd, whither wouldst conduct
This morsel-hunting mendicant obscene,
Gleaner of scraps and fragments ? many a post
Shall chafe his brawny shoulders, while he seeks
Nor sword nor tripod, but the scoundrel meed
Of mammocks, such as others cast away.
Wouldst thou afford him to me for a guard
Or sweeper of my stalls, or to supply
My kids with leaves, he should on bulkier thewes
Supported stand, though nourish'd but with whey.
But no such useful arts hath he acquir'd,

* Ithacus and Neritus were sons of Pterelaus, who derived himself from Jove. At first they dwelt in Cephallenia, but, passing thence into the nearest island, and finding it, on account of its elevated form, a convenient place for the construction of a city, they built one, which, after Ithacus, was named Ithaca ; a name by which afterwards the whole island was denominated ; and the mountain adjoining to the city received the name of Neritus.—B. & C.

Nor likes he work, but rather much t' extort
From others food for his unsated maw.
But mark my prophecy, for it is true ;
At fam'd Ulysses' house should he arrive,
Hurl'd by the guests shall many a footstool whizz
Around his ears, and from his ribs rebound.

So spake the babbler, and, approaching, smote
With brutal force of his uplifted heel
Ulysses' haunch, yet shook not from his path
The firm-set chief ; irresolute awhile
He stood, and doubtful, whether with his staff
To strike him dead, or, heaving him on high,
To dash him headlong downward on the stones,
But, prudent, curb'd his vengeance. With disdain,
Mean-time, Eumæus ey'd him, and, aloud,
With lifted hands the Naiads thus implor'd :

Nymphs of these fountains, progeny of Jove !
If e'er Ulysses on your altar burn'd
The thighs of fatted lambs or kids, O grant,
That, under conduct of some gracious Pow'r,
The long-regretted chief may soon return !
So shall those lips be taught an humbler strain,
Nor, while thou roam'st the city, shall the flocks,
Left with bad shepherds, perish day by day.

To whom Melantheus answer thus return'd :
Gods ! with what force and fluency the whelp

Hath spoken ! He shall hence on board my bark
With me, hereafter, to a distant shore,
Where I will sell him at no little gain.
I would, that he who bears the silver bow
As sure might pierce Telemachus this day
In his own house, or that the suitors might,
As that same wand'rer shall return no more !

He said and went. They slowly pac'd behind,
But, swifter, he soon reach'd Ulysses' house,
Where, ent'ring with a fearless stride, he join'd
The suitors, and his fav'rite of them all
Eurymachus. The sewer with dispatch
His portion set before him, and his bread,
As quick, the mistress of the stores supplied.
Ulysses, and his faithful guide, the while,
Eumæus, drawing near, the sound perceiv'd
Symphonious of the tuneful voice and lyre,
For Phemius had begun. They paus'd. The chief
Seiz'd fast Eumæus' hand, and thus he said :

Ulysses' house, Eumæus ! is, in truth,
A noble pile ; discernible with ease
From all besides. Not one alone it seems,
But many. Spacious are the courts ; the walls
Crested with curious sculpture, and well-fram'd
The massy folding doors. No man, methinks,
Should e'er achieve by force his entrance here.

But many a guest sits banquetting within,
Full well I know ; so fast the sav'ry steam
Fumes upward, and so sweetly sounds the lyre,
Divine associate of the festal board.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
Thou hast well judg'd ; no wonder ; thou art quick
On ev'ry theme ; but now bethink thee well,
What course were wisest. Ent'ring, if thou wilt,
The mansion, to the suitors' presence tend,
Me leaving here ; or I will enter first,
While thou remain'st ; but fear to tarry long,
Lest some proud herald, seeing thee without,
Chase thee with stones, or strike thee. This concern
Asks serious thought ; delib'rate and decide.

Him answer'd, then, the patient hero bold :
It is enough. I understand. Thou speak'st
To one intelligent. Lead thou the way,
Me leaving here, for neither strokes nor stones
Are strange to me. Familiar with the toils
Of battle and with stormy seas, I boast
Much patience. Follow next, what follow may !
But hunger hath a cry, which never man
Might silence. Many an evil he endures
For hunger's sake. It is a craving gulf,
To satiate which, we plough the barren Deep
For battle arm'd, and ravage distant shores.

Thus they convers'd ; when, lying near, his head
Ulysses' dog, the faithful Argus, heav'd,
And set his ears erect. The chief himself
Had rear'd him, but, departing to the shores
Of Ilium, left the trial of his worth
To youths oft-times indebted to his speed
For wild-goat, hart, and hare. Forlorn he lay,
A poor unheeded cast-off, on the ground,
Where mules and oxen had before the gate
Much ordure left, with which Ulysses' hinds
Should, in due time, manure his spacious fields.
There lay, by vermin worried to the bone,
The wretched Argus ; soon as he perceiv'd
Long-lost Ulysses nigh, down fell his ears
Clapp'd close, and with his tail glad sign he gave
Of gratulation, impotent to rise,
And to approach his master. At that sight
Ulysses, unperceiv'd, a starting tear
Wip'd off, and of Eumæus thus inquir'd* :
I can but wonder, seeing such a dog

* The poet, says Plutarch, has well exemplified the effect of unexpected evils. Ulysses weeps for the death of Argus, but sits with dry eyes in the presence of weeping Penelope. The reason is, that for her tears he was prepared beforehand, and knew likewise, that he had a remedy for them ; but the death of his dog occurred to him on the sudden, and for that he had made no preparation.

Thus lodg'd, Eumæus ! beautiful he seems,
 But wanted, I suspect, due speed to match
 His comely shape ; a table-guard, belike,
 And for his looks priz'd more than for his use.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
 He is the dog of one far hence deceas'd.
 But had he now such body, plight, and strength,
 As when his lord, departing to the shores
 Of Ilium, left him, thou shouldst view, at once,
 With wonder, his agility and force.
 He never in the sylvan deep recess
 The wild beast saw, that scap'd him, and he track'd
 Their steps infallible ; but comfort none
 Enjoys he now ; for distant far from home
 His lord hath died, and, heedless of his dog,
 The women neither house nor give him food.
 For whom Jove dooms to servitude, he takes
 At once the half of that man's worth away*.

He spake ; and, passing the wide portal, came
 Where the imperious suitors feasting sat.
 And Argus, soon as in the twentieth year

* The following sentence of Theognis expresses the same opinion :

Οὐ ποτε δαλείη κεφαλὴ εὐθεῖα πέφυκεν,

Ἄλλ' αἰεὶ σκολιή. ——— C.

No servant's head stands upright on his shoulders ;
 Theirs always have a twist.

He had beheld once more with sparkling eyes
His lord Ulysses, clos'd them, and expir'd*.

Long ere the rest Telemachus perceiv'd
The swineherd's entrance, and with beck'ning brows
Invited his approach. Eumæus cast
His eye around, and, seeing near at hand
The sewer's seat, which he was wont to fill,
While with their portions of the feast he serv'd
The num'rous guests, he plac'd it right before
Telemachus, whose herald soon with bread
From the full basket, and with various meats,
An ample share, supplied the welcome swain.
Him soon Ulysses follow'd, ent'ring slow
The palace, like a squalid beggar old,
Staff-propp'd, and in loose tatters foul attir'd.
Within the portal on its ashen sill
His seat he found, and, as he sat, reclin'd

* The opinion of the ancients was, that Argus might have lived a little longer, had not his joy at the sight of his old master overpowered him.

As for the age to which the life of a dog may reach, Aristotle says, that the Spartan dog lives ten years, the bitch about twelve; the dogs of other countries about fourteen or fifteen, some even twenty. So that Homer, ascribing twenty to Argus, is by many deemed not to have exceeded. Ælian on the contrary is so much of a different opinion, that he calls it a *lusus Homericus*.—B. & C. The age of dogs probably varies according to their various kinds, countries, and treatment.

Against a cypress pillar, straight, and tall,
And shaven smooth, the labour'd work of art.
Then took Telemachus a loaf entire
Forth from the shining basket, and of flesh
A portion, such as with both hands he might,
And gave his friend Eumæus thus in charge :

These to the stranger ; bid him also seek
Some dole from ev'ry suitor ; bashful fear
Ill suits the mendicant by want oppress'd.

He spake, and, as he bade, Eumæus sought
Ulysses, whom approaching, thus he said :

Telemachus, O stranger, sends thee these,
And counsels thee to importune for more.
The suitors, one by one ; for bashful fear
Ill suits the mendicant by want oppress'd.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
Jove, King of all ! all happiness impart
To dear Telemachus, and ev'ry wish,
That warms his gen'rous bosom most, fulfil.

He spake, and in his open palms receiv'd
The plenteous boon, which spreading at his feet.
On his unseemly wallet, while the bard
Still sang, he fed, and when the tuneful voice
And lyre were heard no more, he ceas'd to feed.
Then with loud tumult of the suitors rang
The lofty dome, and Pallas, whisp'ring, bade

Ulysses ask a dole of remnant bread
From each, for trial of the smother sort
And of the more austere ; although she teem'd
With like unsparing vengeance for them all.
From right to left * his progress he began,
Petitioning, with outstretch'd hands, the throng,
As one familiar with the beggar's art.
He mov'd them and they gave, but view'd him still
With wonder, and inquiries mutual made
Who, and whence was he ? Then the goatherd rose,
Melantheus, and th' assembly thus address'd :

Hear me, ye suitors of th' illustrious queen !
This uninvited stranger have I met
Elsewhere ; the swineherd brought him ; but he comes
I know not whence ; nor yet from whom he sprang.

So he ; then thus Antinoüs stern rebuk'd
The swineherd : Ah, notorious as thou art,
Why hast thou shown this vagabond the way
Into the city ? are we not enough
Infested with these whining hungry drones ?
And hast thou sought him as a needful aid
Of others like himself, who, swarming here,
Feed, never sated, at thy master's cost ?

* That he might begin auspiciously. Wine was served in the same direction.—F.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
Antinoüs ! though of high degree, thou speak'st
Not wisely. For who roams from shore to shore
In quest of any man, unless he claim,
For **some** conspicuous talent, such regard ?
The prophet, and the healer of disease,
The skilful artist, and the bard inspir'd
With strains that charm his hearers, these we seek,
And these in ev'ry nation under Heav'n
Are dearly priz'd. But who would seek afar,
To his own hurt, th' unprofitable poor ?
But thou of all the suitors roughly treat'st
Ulysses' servants most, and chiefly me ;
Proceed ; I fear thee little, while the queen,
With her illustrious son, inhabits here*.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
Peace ! answer not at large a man like him.
Antinoüs hath a tongue accustom'd much
To tauntings, and promotes them in the rest.

Then, turning to Antinoüs, quick he said—
Antinoüs ! thy paternal kindness claims

* The argument seems to be this. You ask me why I have invited a vagabond ? I answer, because, in general, they only who exercise some public function are objects of such favour. As for the poor, they are never so distinguished. I have therefore invited this indigent person, sensible that, had he not been asked hither by me, he would have remained unasked by every body.

My filial thanks, who bidd'st me sternly drive
The friendless stranger hence; but God forbid*!
Impart to him. I grudge not, rather much
Myself exhort thee. Neither fear the queen
In such a cause, nor let the meaner fear
Of servants check thee. But thy bosom glows
With no such warmth; thou pleasure find'st it none,
T' impart; thy sole delight is to receive.

To whom Antinoüs answer thus return'd;
High-soaring and intemp'rate in thy speech,
How hast thou said, Telemachus? Would all
As much bestow on him, he should not seek
Admittance here again three months to come.

So saying, he seiz'd the stool, which, banquetting,
He press'd with his nice feet, and from beneath
The table forth advanc'd it into view.

The rest all gave to him, with bread and flesh
Filling his bag. Now, therefore, he prepar'd
Returning to his threshold, there to taste
His mendicated mess, but paus'd awhile
Beside Antinoüs, whom he thus bespake:

Kind sir, vouchsafe to me! for thou appear'st
Not least, but greatest of the Achaians here,
And hast a kingly look. It might become

* Here again Θεός occurs in the abstract.

Thee therefore above others to bestow,
So should I praise thee wheresoe'er I roam*.
I also liv'd the rich possessor once
Of such a stately mansion, and have giv'n
To num'rous wand'ers (whencesoe'er they came)
All that they needed; I was also serv'd
By many, and enjoy'd whate'er denotes
The envied owner opulent and blest.
But Jove (for such his pleasure was) dispers'd
At once my riches, prompting me to seek,
With rovers of the flood, the distant shores
Of Ægypt, for my sure destruction there.
Within th' Ægyptian stream my barks I moor'd,
And, charging my companions not to stray,
But closely guard the ships, selected some,
Who should ascend the rising grounds, and thence
Descry the country: but on evil bent,
And unrestrain'd by fear, these flew, at once,
To rapine; wasted the delightful fields
Of the Ægyptians, captive brought away
Their wives and little ones, and slew the men.
The city soon alarm'd, at early dawn
Forth came the citizens, both horse and foot,

* Bocchus in the Jugurthine war of Sallust says—It is less dishonourable to a king to be overcome in battle, than in munificence.
—C.

And with the splendour of their dazzling arms
Fill'd all the plain. Then Jove with panic dread
Possess'd my people : none found courage more,
To stand, for mischiefs swarm'd on ev'ry side.
There num'rous by the glitt'ring spear we fell,
While others they conducted thence alive
To toilsome servitude ; but me they gave,
Far thence in Cyprus landed, to the king,
Dmetor Iasides, from whom I scap'd
In evil plight, and now seek refuge here.

Then answer thus Antinoüs harsh return'd :
What demon introduc'd this nuisance here,
This troubler of our feast ? stand yonder, keep
Due distance from my board, or thou shalt see
Ægypt and Cyprus with a vengeance soon,
Bold mendicant and destitute of shame !
Thou hauntest each, and, inconsiderate, each
Gives thee, because a gift at others' cost
Is cheap, and, plentifully serv'd themselves,
They squander, heedless, viands not their own*.

To whom Ulysses, while he slow retir'd :

* This speech is admirably adapted to the proud and injurious character of Antinoüs, who, while he himself sets the other suitors an example of rapine, and has no mercy on the goods of Ulysses, the moment he sees them giving a scrap to a beggar, both accuses them of profusion, and hypocritically covers his own obduracy with the pretext of equity and consideration.—C.

Gods! how illib'ral with that specious form!
Thou wouldst not grant the poor a grain of salt
From thy own board, who, at another's fed
So nobly, canst not spare a crust to me.

He spake; then rag'd Antinoüs still the more,
And in wing'd accents, low'ring, thus replied:

Take such dismissal now as thou deserv'st,
Opprobrious! hast thou dar'd to scoff at me?

So saying, he seiz'd his stool, and on the joint
Of his right shoulder smote him; firm as rock
He stood, by no such force to be displac'd,
But silent shook his brows, and dreadful deeds
Of vengeance ruminating, sought again
His seat the threshold, where his bag full-charg'd
He ground, and the suitors thus address'd:

Hear now, ye suitors of the matchless queen!
If, fighting in protection of our own,
Or sheep or oxen, we receive a blow,
We deem the grievance slight; but me the fierce
Antinoüs strikes, for that I dare complain
Of hunger, source of num'rous ills to man.
If then, ye Gods! with pitying eyes ye see
The poor man injur'd, bid the Furies seize
Antinoüs, ere his nuptial hour arrive!

To whom Antinoüs answer thus return'd,
Son of Eupithes: Stranger! thou hast food;

Eat, therefore, and be still, or now depart;
Lest my young friends, to recompense aright
Thy curses, drag thee by the feet or hands
This moment forth, and thou be flay'd alive.

He said, whom even they with horror heard
Themselves, and thus, indignant, one replied :

Antinoüs ! thou didst not well to smite
This hapless vagrant, and the Gods, perchance,
For thy misdeed will doom us all to die ;
For, in similitude of strangers oft,
The Gods, who can with ease all shapes assume,
Repair to populous cities, where they mark
Th' outrageous and the righteous deeds of men *.

So they, for whose reproof he little car'd.
But in his heart Telemachus bewail'd
His father's wrongs, yet wept not, but his brows
In silence shaking, teem'd with dire revenge,
And soon as news of a poor wand'rer bruise'd
And in her house insulted, reach'd her ears,

* Diodorus Siculus affirms it to have been the established belief of the Ægyptians, that the Gods, either in a human form or in the form of some animal held sacred, visited occasionally all the habitable parts of the Earth. A circumstance, he observes, not worthy to be accounted fabulous, but probable, if indeed the world be of their creation.—Homer having visited Ægypt, and received this doctrine from the priests of the country, mentions it here as a verity, concerning which there could be no dispute or question.—C.

The queen, amidst her women, thus exclaim'd—

So strike Apollo, glorious Archer, thee!

She said, and thus Eurynome replied:

Might pray'rs of ours prevail, no suitor there
Should see bright chariotted Aurora more.

Her answer'd then Penelope discreet:
Nurse! I detest them all, for all alike
They teem with mischief; but Antinoüs' looks,
Dark as the frowns of Fate, appal me most.
A stranger, urg'd by want, the palace roams
Imploring food from all, which all besides
Vouchsaf'd him largely, but Eupithes' son
Antinoüs, bruis'd his shoulder with a stool.

While thus the queen conversing with her train
In her own chamber sat, Ulysses made
Plenteous repast. Then, calling to her side
Eumæus, thus she signified her will:

My noble friend, Eumæus! hither call
Yon stranger; I would greet him, and would ask,
If he have seen Ulysses, or have heard
Tidings, perchance, of our unhappy lord,
For much a wand'rer by his garb he seems.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply:
Were those Achaians silent, thou shouldst hear,
O queen! a tale, that would thy sorrow sooth.
Three nights I hous'd him, and within my cot

Three days detain'd him (for his ship he left
A fugitive, and came direct to me),
But half untold his story yet remains.
As when his eye one fixes on a bard
From Heav'n instructed in such themes as charm
The ear of mortals, ever as he sings
The people press, insatiable, to hear ;
So, in my cottage, seated at my side
That stranger with his tale enchanted me.
Laertes, he affirms, hath been his guest
Erewhile in Crete, where Minos had his birth ;
And thence, despoil'd of all, and driv'n by fate
From shore to shore, arriving suppliant here,
He tells, that in Thesprotia's neighbour realm
He of Ulysses heard, both that he lives,
And that he comes with riches laden home.

To whom Penelope, discreet, replied :
Haste ; call him. I would hear, myself, his tale.
Mean-time, let these, or in the palace-gate
Or in the palace, laugh ; their hearts are light,
For their full boards intrusion suffer none :
Their meats, their wines, their own domestics cheer,
And none besides ; while hither, day by day,
Themselves resorting, with our sheep, and beeves,
And fatted goats their ceaseless riot feed,
Nor spare the richest wines. Thus hourly shrink

Our copious stores, and there is no control ;
 For no such friend, as was Ulysses once,
 Have I t' expel the mischief. But might he
 Revisit once his native shores again,
 Then, aided by his son, he should avenge,
 Incontinent, the wrongs which now I mourn.

Then sneez'd Telemachus with sudden force,
 That all the palace rang; his mother laugh'd,
 And in wing'd accents thus the swain bespake:

Haste—bid him hither—that propitious sneeze* --
 (Didst thou not hear it?) was my son's reply,
 The voice of instant doom. Their death impends,
 Nor shall one suitor of them all escape.
 And mark me well. Should confirmation wait
 On his report, he shall from me receive
 Mantle and tunic both for his reward.

She spake; he went, and where Ulysses sat
 Arriving, and in wing'd accents thus began :

Penelope, my venerable friend !
 Invites thee, mother of the godlike youth
 Telemachus; much troubled, she would learn

* The sneeze was accounted by the ancients a favourable omen, because it proceeds from the head, the most honourable part of the person. For which reason it was customary to bow to the sneezer. B. & C.—In an epigram of the Anthologia it is said—

Οὐδὲ λέγει, Ζεῦ σῶσον, ἔαν πταρῇ.—C.

Nor says, God bless me ! if he sneeze.

From thee some tidings of her absent lord;
And should the sequel prove them, will requite
Thy truth with such a boon as most thou need'st,
With vest and mantle; but she gives no more;
With plenteous food the people, if they please,
Can well supply thee; seek it where thou mayst*.

Then thus Ulysses, hero toil-inur'd:
Eumæus! I could even now relate
Truth, and truth only, to the prudent queen,
Icarius' daughter; for of him I know
Much, and have suffer'd sorrows like his own.
But that this churlish multitude I fear,
The suitors; whose enormities and acts
Of outrage echo through the vault of Heav'n.
For while, this moment, guilty of no crime
Besides, I roam'd the palace, asking bread,
Antinoüs, save a bruise, vouchsaf'd me nought;
Nor could Telemachus avert the blow,
Nor other here. Now, therefore, let the queen,
Howe'er impatient, till the sun descend
Postpone her questions, better far resolv'd
What time she may supply me with a seat
Less distant from the fire; for, thinly clad,
As well thou know'st, I reach'd thy friendly door.

* This seems added by Eumæus, to cut off from Ulysses the hope, that might otherwise tempt him to use fiction.

He ceas'd; whose answer heard, Eumæus went,
And, meeting him ere yet the swain had pass'd
Her threshold, thus Penelope inquir'd :

Com'st thou alone? What means our wand'ring
 guest,

Eumæus; fears he still some heavier harm?
Or is it awe, that checks him? Ill befits
A bashful awe the wand'rer and the poor.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply :
He hath well spoken; none, who would decline
The rudeness of this contumelious throng,
Could answer otherwise; he prays thee much,
To wait till sun-set, and that course, O queen,
Thou wilt, thyself, prefer; since more at ease,
Far more, thou shalt converse with him alone.

Then answer thus Penelope return'd :
The stranger, I perceive, is not unwise,
Whoe'er he be; for under Heav'n are none
Proud, insolent, and profligate as these.

So spake the queen, whom (all his message told)
Eumæus leaving, join'd the throng again,
And in close-whisper'd accents, lest his words
Should reach the suitors, thus the prince address'd :

Friend and kind master! I return to keep
My charge the swine, with whatsoe'er besides
Yields sust'nance for us both. Keep thou, mean time,

All here with vigilance, but chiefly watch
For thy own good, and save *thyself* from harm ;
For num'rous here brood mischief, whom the Gods
Exterminate, ere yet their plots prevail !

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
My father, finishing thy next repast,
Return as thou hast said, and hither drive
At early dawn fresh victims for the day,
Well-chosen ; with assistance of the Gods
Myself and mine, the while, shall rest secure.

He ended ; then resum'd once more the swain
His polish'd seat, and, both with wine and food
Now sated, to his charge return'd, the court
Leaving, and all the palace throng'd with guests ;
They (for it was now evening) all alike
Turn'd jovial to the song and to the dance.

ARGUMENT OF THE EIGHTEENTH BOOK.

The beggar Irus arrives at the palace ; a combat takes place between him and Ulysses, in which Irus is by one blow vanquished. Penelope appears to the suitors, and having reminded them of the presents which she had a right to expect from them, receives a gift from each. Eurymachus, provoked by a speech of Ulysses, flings a footstool at him, which knocks down the cup-bearer ; a general tumult is the consequence, which continues, till by the advice of Telemachus, seconded by Amphinomus, the suitors retire to their respective homes.

BOOK XVIII.

NOW came a public mendicant, a man
Accustom'd, seeking alms, to roam the streets
Of Ithaca; one never sated yet
With food or drink; yet muscle had he none,
Or force, though tall and of gigantic size.
Arnæus, in the day which gave him birth,
His mother call'd him, but, jocosely bent,

The suitors, with whose messages he sped
 From place to place, for his employment' sake,
 All nam'd him Irus. From his own abode,
 Arriving there, this coarse intruder sought
 T' expel Ulysses, whom he thus rebuk'd:

Forth from the porch, old man! or by the feet
 I drag thee forth. Perceiv'st thou not a wink
 On ev'ry brow? They bid me to the task,
 Which I, through rev'rence of thy years alone,
 As yet decline. Rise, therefore, or with fists
 We must contend, in evil hour for thee*.

To whom Ulysses, low'ring, thus replied:
 Friend! neither word austere nor deed of mine
 Hath injur'd thee, nor, whatsoe'er thou gain,
 Shall I with envious eyes regard the boon.
 The sill may serve us both. Thou dost not well
 To grudge *me* food, who seem'st thyself forlorn,
 Not less than I; since that the wand'rer wins,
 Or less or more, is all the gift of Heav'n.
 But move me not to box; lest, sore incens'd,

* Comedy perhaps derives its origin from the works of Homer, who first discovered, that the most serious and sublime subjects would admit of ludicrous episodes. He therefore introduces to the profligate suitors the beggar Irus challenging his hero to box, and making a ridiculous figure on the occasion. For provocation, as well as pain and misery, is universally incident to the nature and condition of man, and is a part of the discipline, by which he is qualified to endure the ills of life.—Dionys. Halicarn.—C.

Though worn with age, sufficient force I find,
To fill thy mouth and bosom with thy blood.
So my attendance should to morrow prove
More tranquil here; for thou shouldst leave, I judge,
Ulysses' mansion, never to return.

Then answer'd Irus, kindling with disdain :
Ye Gods, how voluble in his harangue
The hungry wretch ! How like a wither'd hag
Begrin'd with smoke he prates ! but ah beware !
For I intend thee mischief, and to dash
With both hands ev'ry grinder from thy gums,
As men untooth a pig pilf'ring the corn*.
Come—gird thee, that all here may view the strife—
But how wilt thou oppose one young as I ?

Thus on the threshold of the lofty gate
They, wrangling, chaf'd each other, whose dispute
The high-born youth Antinoüs mark'd ; he laugh'd
Delighted, and the suitors thus address'd :

O friends ! no pastime ever yet occur'd
Delectable as this, which Heav'n itself
Now yields us. Irus and the stranger brawl,
As they would box. Haste—urge them lest they cool.

* It was a law in Salamis, an island abounding with corn, that, if a swine entered a field and browsed, her teeth should be knocked out.—B. & C. An effectual cure perhaps, but less humane and equitable than our practice of pounding.

He said; they, laughing, started at the word,
And flew at once on all sides to surround
The tatter'd pair; when thus Antinoüs spake:

Attend ye noble suitors to my voice.

The paunches of two goats lie broiling here,
Which, fill'd with sav'ry pulp, we plac'd apart
For supper; the victorious shall of these
Election make*, and shall with us thenceforth
Feast always; nor shall mendicant, except
Himself alone, find entrance here again.

He spake, whom all approv'd; next, artful chief,
Ulysses thus, dissembling, them address'd:

Princes! unequal is the strife between
A young man and an old with mis'ry worn;
But hunger, always counsellor of ill,
Me moves to fight, that, many a bruise receiv'd,
I may be foil'd at last. Now, therefore, swear
A solemn oath, that none, for Irus' sake,
Shall interfere to smite me, that, subdu'd
By force superiour, I may yield the prize.

He ceas'd, and, as he bade, all present swore
A solemn oath; then thus, amid them all
Telemachus, illustrious youth, began:

* A fit prize, it is observed, for two hungry combatants quarrelling for food.—B. & C.

Guest! if thy spirit prompt thee to the task,
Fearless of all besides, expel him hence.
For whoso dares smite thee, shall soon receive
Himself a large requital; I am here
In the host's office, and the royal chiefs,
Antinoüs and Eurymachus, alike
Discreet, accord unanimous with me.

He ceas'd, whom all approv'd. Then, girding close
His rags about his loins, Ulysses bar'd
His round and brawny thighs, his ample chest,
Huge arms, and shoulders broad; while, at his side,
Dilating more the hero's limbs and more
Minerva stood; the assembly with fix'd eyes
Astonish'd gaz'd on him, and, looking full
On his next friend, a suitor thus remark'd*:

* Dionysius Halicar. observes on this passage, that the first instance of a naked runner at the Olympic games was Acanthus the Spartan, in the 15th Olympiad. Before that time, as we learn from Homer, the most credible as well as the most ancient of the poets, the Greeks universally, for decency's sake, girded themselves in their public contests. Accordingly we see the custom observed by Ulysses and Ajax, when they wrestle at the funeral of Patroclus. And more evidently still it is inculcated in the *Odyssey*, where Ulysses in his combat with Irus, rather than not be girded at all, girds himself with his rags, and Irus, who wishes to decline the fight, and is not able to perform that office for himself, is forcibly girded by the servants.

Antiq. Rom. lib. vii.—C

Irus in Irus shall no more be found,
 Irus himself the cause. What youthful force
 Surviving in old age those tatters hid !

So he—mean-time in Irus' heart arose
 Horrible tumult ; yet, his loins by force
 Girding, the servants dragg'd him to the fight
 Pale, and his flesh all quiv'ring as he came ;
 Whose terrours thus Antinoüs rebuk'd :

Now, wherefore liv'st, and why wast ever born,
 Thou mountain-mass of earth ! if such dismay
 Shake thee at thought of combat with a man
 Enfeebled by distress, and worn with age ?
 But mark, I threaten not in vain ; should he
 Subdue thee, and in force superiour prove,
 My bark shall bear thee, cast into her hold,
 T' Epirus, realm of Echetus, the pest
 And terrour of mankind* ; of nose and ears
 He shall despoil thee with his ruthless steel,
 And tearing by the roots the parts away,

* Echetus was one of the tyrants of Sicily, infamous for oppressing his subjects and murdering strangers. He had such renown for cruelty, that, when a criminal of a distant country was adjudged worthy of uncommon punishment, he was sent to Echetus ; whose invention of painful and ignominious means of torture was so inexhaustible, and so wantonly exercised, that, at last, his people, unable to endure him longer, very properly stoned him.—B. & C.

Homer calls him a king, and not a tyrant, because the word *τυραννος* was unknown to him.—C.

That mark thy sex, shall cast them to the dogs*.

He ended, and still more the trembler's limbs
Shook under him ; into the middle space
They led him, and each rais'd his hands on high.
Then stood Ulysses musing and in doubt,
Whether to strike him lifeless to the ground
At once, or fell him with a manag'd blow.
To smite with manag'd force at length he chose
As wisest, lest, betray'd by his own strength,
He should be known. Each rais'd his fist, and each
Assail'd his opposite. Him Irus struck
On the right shoulder ; but Laertes' son
Full on the neck and close beneath his ear
Smote Irus with a force that snapp'd the bones.
He, spouting through his lips a crimson stream,
With chatt'ring teeth and hideous outcry fell,
And with his heels, recumbent, thump'd the ground.
Loud laugh'd the suitors, lifting each his hands,
As they would die ; when, seizing fast his heels,
Ulysses dragg'd him through the palace-door,
Athwart his area to the distant porch,
Where, placing him reclin'd against the wall,
He gave him his rude staff, and thus he said :

* Tradition says that Echetus, for a love-affair, condemned his daughter to lose her eyes, and to grind iron barleycorns, while her lover was doomed to suffer what Antinous threatens to Irus.—F.

There seated now dogs drive and swine away,
Nor claim (thyself so base) supreme control
O'er other guests and mendicants, lest harm
Befall thee next, still heavier to be borne.

So saying, his old patch'd wallet by the twist
Once more he slung, and, turning to the sill,
His seat resum'd. The suitors, as he turn'd,
Turn'd also; still they laugh'd, and, at his side
Assembling, thus their gratitude express'd:

Jove, and all Jove's assessors in the skies
Vouchsafe thee, stranger, whatsoe'er it be,
Thy heart's desire! who hast our ears reliev'd
From that insatiate beggar's irksome tone.
T' Epirus, realm of Echetus, that fierce
And ruthless tyrant, shall he soon depart.

Thus greeted, with delight Ulysses caught
The joyful omen. Then Antinoüs plac'd
The well-fill'd paunch before him, and two loaves
From his own store Amphinomus, who charg'd
His goblet also, drank to him, and said:

My father, hail! O stranger, be thy lot
Hereafter blest, however now severe!

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
Amphinomus! to me thou seem'st endu'd
With such discretion as befits the son
Of such a sire, whose fair report I know,

Dulichian Nysus, opulent and good.

By rumour thou art his ; and prudence show'st
That speaks that rumour true. Now, therefore, hear.

Earth nourishes, of all that breathe or creep,
No creature weak as man ; for while the Gods
Grant him firm health and plenty, neither fear
Nor thought hath he, that he shall ever mourn ;

But when the Gods with evils unforeseen
Smite him, he bears them with a grudging mind ;

For such as the complexion of his lot

By the appointment of the Sire of all,

Such is the colour of the mind of man.

Myself have also known in other days

Both wealth and ease ; but I was then self-will'd,

And many wrong'd, embolden'd by the thought

Of my own father's and my brethren's pow'r.

Deal, therefore, none unjustly, but let each

Use modestly what gift soe'er of Heav'n*.

So do not these. These ever bent I see

* Euripides in his Hecuba speaks to the same purport.

Οὐ τὸς κρατῆντας χροὴ κρατεῖν ἄ μὴ χρεῶν.

Οὐδ' εὐτυχῆντας εὖ δοκεῖν πράττειν ἀεὶ.

Κάγω γὰρ ἦν ποτ', ἀλλὰ νῦν ἐκ εἰμ' ἔτι,

Τὸν πάντα δ' ὄλβον ἡμαρ ἐν μ' ἀφείλετο.—C.

Let not the powerful abuse his pow'r,

Nor the happy dream of being always such ;

Such once was I, but am not now—my good

Was all torn from me in a single day.

On deeds injurious, the possessions large
Consuming and dishonouring the wife
Of one, who will not, as I judge, remain
Long absent from his home, but is, perchance,
Ev'n at the door. Thee, therefore, may the Gods
Steal hence in time ! ah, meet not his return
To his own country ! for no bloodless strife
Shall his, believe me, with the suitors prove,
Should once he reach his long-sought home again.

He ended, and, libation pouring, quaff'd
The gen'rous juice, then in the prince's hand
Replac'd the cup ; he, pensive, and his head
Inclining low, pass'd from him ; for his heart
Foreboded ill ; yet scap'd not even he,
But in the snare of Pallas caught, his life
To the heroic arm and spear resign'd
Of brave Telemachus. He, therefore, sought
The throne whence he had ris'n, and sat again.

And now Minerva, Goddess azure-ey'd,
Inspir'd Icarius' daughter with the thought,
T' appear before the suitors ; so t' expose
Their impious drift the more, and that herself
Still more illustrious in Ulysses' eyes
Might shine, and in her son's. She forc'd a smile,
Dissembling her distress, and thus she said :

A wish, Eurynome ! ne'er felt before,

(For I detest them all) now prompts me much,
 T' appear before the suitors ; I, perchance,
 May somewhat speak, that shall induce my son,
 T' associate less with those, who give him words
 Of oily smoothness, but his death intend*.

Then answer thus Eurynome return'd :
 My daughter ! thou hast wisely said and well.
 Bathe, therefore, first, and o'er thy cheeks diffuse
 The grace of unction ; then, suppressing nought,
 Advise thy son ; but show not there thy face
 Sullied with tears, for 'vantage none derives
 From ceaseless grief ; and thou hast cause of joy,
 Since thy Telemachus a bearded youth
 Thou seest, whom such it was thy pray'r to see †.

* Thus Demosthenes, as cited by Clarke,

Orat. de Falsâ Legatione.

Ὅστις δ' ὁμιλῶν ἥδεται κακοῖς ἀνὴρ,
 Οὐ πώποτ' ἠρώτησα, γιγνώσκων ὅτι
 Τοιῦτός ἐστιν οἷς περ ἥδεται ξυνών.

But I no converse ever held with men,
 Who choose base company, aware that all
 Resemble those, whose fellowship they love.

† Madame Dacier is persuaded, that Eurynome does not suggest as matter of consolation to her mistress the maturity of her son, but as an argument to enforce the measure she has just recommended. The learned lady is of opinion, that Penelope, being mother of a son now arrived at manhood, might reasonably enough be reminded, that a little attention to the embellishments of dress could hardly be superfluous.

Her answer'd then Penelope discreet :
Persuade not me, though studious of my good,
Eurynome ! to bathe or to anoint
My face with oil ; for when Ulysses sail'd,
On that same day, the Pow'rs of Heav'n deform'd
And wither'd all my beauties ; therefore haste,
Hippodamia bring, and bring with her
Autonœe, for I shall need them both
T' attend me there ; since decency forbids,
That I should enter to the men alone.

She ceas'd ; and, as she bade, her ancient nurse
Hasted to summon whom she had enjoin'd.

Then Pallas azure-ey'd, occasion found,
To visit with the balmy dews of sleep
Icarius' daughter ; on her wonted couch
Reclining, soon as she reclin'd, she doz'd,
And yielded to soft slumber all her frame.
Then, that the suitors might admire her more,
The glorious Goddess cloth'd her, as she lay,
With beauty of the skies ; her lovely face
With such ambrosial unguent first she bath'd,
As Cytherea chaplet-crown'd employs

A wonderful interpretation, as Clarke observes, not to say a foolish one. It proves, however, that a very learned person may be much a student of Homer, and may even write a commentary on him without acquiring in the smallest degree a taste for his simplicity.

Herself, when in the sight-entangling dance
She joins the Graces ; more majestic size
And stature next she gave her, and her hue
Made fairer than the elephantine bone
Fresh from the carver's hand. These gifts conferr'd
Divine, the glorious Deity retir'd.

And now, loud-prattling as they came, arriv'd
Her handmaids ; sleep forsook her at the sound,
She wip'd a falling tear, and thus she said :

Care-soothing sleep—how welcome to the soul
Distress'd as mine ! I would that, with a touch
As gentle, chaste Diana would herself
This moment set me free, that I might waste
My life no longer in heart-felt regret
Of a lamented husband's various worth
And virtue, for in Greece no peer had he !

She spake, and, her magnificent recess
Forsaking, downward went ; nor went she sole,
But with those two fair menials of her train.
Arriving, most majestic of her sex,
In presence of the num'rous guests, beneath
The portal of the stately dome she stood
Between her maidens, cover'd, not conceal'd,
And shining through her veil. The sudden blaze
Astonish'd them, and with intense desire
Fill'd each, to make the beauteous prize his own ;

When thus the queen her list'ning son bespake :

Telemachus ! thou art no longer wise,

As once thou wast, and even when a child.

For though thy bloom, thy stature, and thy size

Bespeak thee such, that, even at a glance,

A stranger would discern thy princely birth,

Still is thy judgement weak and immature.

For what is this ? why suffer'st thou a guest,

To be abus'd in thy own palace ? how ?

Know'st not, that, if the stranger seated here

Endure vexation, the disgrace is thine* ?

Her answer'd then Telemachus discreet :

I blame thee not, my mother, that thou feel'st

Thine anger mov'd ; yet want I not a mind

Of strength to mark and to discern between

Evil and good ; for, though not now a child,

* Eustathius considers this allegation of the mother as a charge against her son, that he has been too tame a spectator of the injury done to the stranger by Antinoüs, when he threw a stool at him ; and the answer of Telemachus, in which he takes not the least notice of that incident, but exculpates the suitors respecting the combat between Ulysses and Irus, he considers as an artful evasion, to which he has recourse for the sake of peace, and that he may cut short at once a disagreeable subject, the discussion of which could at present answer no good purpose. But Clarke, who seems to have more probability on his side, can see no reason why Penelope may not be supposed to allude to the combat, in which case the answer of Telemachus is direct and natural.

I find not truly promptitude of thought
Sufficient always, overaw'd and check'd
By such a multitude, all bent alike
On mischief, of whom none takes part with me.
But Irus and the stranger have not fought,
Urg'd by the suitors; and the stranger prov'd
Victorious. O Apollo, Pallas, Jove!
I would that in the house and in the court
The suitors all sat vanquish'd, with their heads
Depending low, and with enfeebl'd limbs,
Even as that same Irus, with his chin
Propp'd on his bosom in the portal sits,
Drooping as he were drunk, too feeble now,
To stand erect, or seek his proper home.

So they; and now, addressing to the queen
His speech, Eurymachus thus interpos'd:

O daughter of Icarius! could all eyes
Throughout Iasian * Argos view thy charms,
Discreet Penelope! more suitors still,
Assembling in thy courts at early dawn,
Would banquet here; for thou surpassesst far
In beauty, stature, worth, all womankind †.

* From Iäsus, once King of Peloponnesus.

† Aristotle's opinion, which was probably that of his countrymen, was, that to be large and tall is essential to female beauty. Diminutive persons, he says, may be elegant and justly formed, but beautiful they cannot be.—Ethic. lib. iv. c. 7.—C.

To whom replied Penelope discreet :
Eurymachus ! my talents and my charms
The Gods ordain'd should wither all and die,
When with the Greeks Ulysses sail'd to Troy.
Could he, returning, guide, as he was wont
My doubtful steps, I should at once display
More worth, and merit far superiour praise.
But grief now mars me, such perpetual storms
Have been my portion.—When he left his home,
Clasping my wrist with his right hand, he said :

My love ! for I imagine not, that all
The warrior Greeks shall safe from Troy return,
Since fame reports the Trojans brave in fight,
Skill'd in the spear, mighty to draw the bow,
And nimble vaulters to the backs of steeds
High-mettled, which to speediest issue bring
The dreadful struggle of all-wasting war—
I know not, therefore, whether Heav'n intend
My safe return, or I must perish there.
But manage thou at home. Neglect not aught
My parents of my filial aid bereft,
But, rather for that cause, more kindly still
Think on them ; and what time our son thou seest
Mature, then wed ; wed even whom thou wilt,
And hence to a new home.—So counsell'd he,
And all his counsel shall be now perform'd.

For, ah ! the night arrives, when hapless I,
My wealth all wasted by the will of Jove,
Must meet perforce the nuptials, which I dread.
But this thought now torments me, and my mind
Continual haunts. Such was not heretofore
The suitor's custom'd practice ; all who chose,
T' engage in competition for a wife
Well-qualified and well-endow'd, produc'd
From their own herds and fatted flocks a feast
For the bride's friends, and splendid presents made,
But ne'er consum'd, as ye, bread not their own.

She ceas'd ; and in his heart Ulysses felt
Some joy, that soothing them, she sought to draw
From each some gift, although on other views,
And more important far, himself intent*.

* If the joy of Ulysses on this occasion proceeded from a principle of covetousness, says Plutarch, comedy never furnished the character of a pimp so odious. But if he rejoices, because he considers the liberality of the suitors as a symptom of such self-security, as cannot fail to deliver them into his hands, he then has reason.—C.

Spondanus however, and not unsatisfactorily, justifies his complacency on a different ground ; ascribing it to his persuasion, that, although Penelope exacted gifts from the suitors, she did it only to feed them with false hopes, and that this was sufficiently understood by her husband.—C.

But perhaps a juster account of the matter than either may be, that the point of delicacy in affairs of a lucrative kind was not much understood or consulted by the ancients. Diomede would otherwise have been brought with difficulty, to consent to the ex-

Then thus Antinoös, Eupithes' son :
Icarius' daughter ! deign but to receive
Such gifts as we shall bring, for gifts demand
That grace, nor can be decently refus'd ;
But neither fields nor mansions of our own
Seek we, be sure, till first thy choice be made
Of the Achaian, chief in thy esteem.

Antinoös spake, whose answer all approv'd.
Then each dispatch'd his herald, who should bring
His master's gift. Antinoös' herald first
A mantle of surpassing beauty brought,
Wide, various, with no fewer clasps adorn'd
Than twelve, all golden ; twelve on either side.
From the same hand Eurymachus receiv'd
A sun-bright chain of amber and of gold.
The gift by rich Eurydamas design'd
Two servants bore ; a broad ear-pendant each,
Of dazzling light profuse, and triple-gemm'd.
And next a collar from his herald's hand,
A splendid ornament, Polyctor's son,

change of arms with Glaucus, which he had himself the conscience to propose. And we find Ulysses in the next book accounting for his long absence in his discourse with Penelope, by telling her, that, though he had amassed immense treasures, he was busied in amassing more. A modern wife would consider such voluntary delay, for such a reason, as no very striking symptom of her husband's impatience to see her again. But Penelope seems well contented.

Pisander, took. Thus ev'ry suitor gave,
And each a gift dissimilar from all.
Then sought the queen her chamber, after whom
Her maidens bore the gifts. Mean-time to dance
And pleasant song, till ev'ning should arrive,
The suitors turn'd, and when the dusky shades
Of ev'ning fell, three vases on the floor
They plac'd, that should illume the spacious hall;
These with dry fuel-wood all newly riv'n
And intermix'd with torches they supplied,
And damsels watch'd by turns and fed the fires,
Whom thus Ulysses, ever-wise, address'd:

Ye servants of your long-regretted lord
Ulysses, to th' interiour house retire,
And to your virtuous queen, that following there
Your sev'ral tasks, spinning and combing wool,
Ye may amuse her; I, mean-time, for these
Will furnish light, and, should they choose to stay
Till golden morn appear, they shall not tire
My patience aught, for I can much endure.

He said; they, titt'ring, on each other gaz'd.
But one, Melantho with the blooming cheeks,
Rebuk'd him rudely. Dolius was her sire,
But by Penelope she had been rear'd
With care maternal, and in infant years
Supplied with many a toy; yet even she

Felt not her mistress' sorrows in her heart,
But, of Eurymachus enamour'd, oft
His lewd embraces met ; she, little won
By brave Ulysses' kindness, thus replied :

Why—what a brainsick vagabond art thou !
Who neither to the smithy * wilt, for sleep,
Nor to the public portico repair,
But, here remaining, with audacious prate
Disturb'st this num'rous company, restrain'd
By no respect or fear ; is wine the cause,
That thus thou speak'st, or wast thou born a fool ?
Or art thou drunk with joy, that thou hast foil'd
The beggar Irus ? Tremble, lest a man
Stronger than Irus suddenly arise,
Whose fists shall on thy batter'd brows descend
With dreadful force, and drive thee foul as blood,
Thine own, can make thee, to some other home.

To whom Ulysses, frowning stern, replied :
Snarler ! I will this moment to the prince,
Thy master, in whose ear I will report.
Thy speech, and he shall hew thee limb by limb.

So saying, he scar'd the women ; back they flew
Into the house, but each with falt'ring knees

* The smith's shop was a place, into which the houseless poor were permitted to enter at night, and where they slept at the forge-side.—Eustath.—C.

Through dread, for they believ'd his threats sincere.
He then, illumin'd by the triple blaze,
His station still maintaining, watch'd the fires,
But in his soul mean-time far other thoughts
Revolv'd, tremendous, not conceiv'd in vain*.

Nor Pallas (that they might exasp'rate more
Laertes' son) permitted to refrain
From heart-corroding bitterness of speech
Those suitors proud; Eurymachus began,
The son of Polybus; and while he mock'd
Ulysses sharply, set them in a roar:

Hear me, ye suitors of th' illustrious queen!
I shall promulge my thought. This man, methinks,
Not unconducted by the Gods, hath reach'd
Ulysses' mansion, for to me the light
Of yonder torches altogether seems
His own, an emanation from his head,
Which not the smallest growth of hair obscures.

He ceas'd, and next the city-wasting chief,
Ulysses, thus address'd: Art thou dispos'd,

* None of Homer's incidents are without their consequences. He sends away the women, that Ulysses may have the fairer opportunity to converse with Penelope, and especially that, having withdrawn themselves, they may, by the aid of Euryclea, be effectually excluded, while the hero and his son remove the arms. A measure which, without that precaution, could hardly have been effected secretly. See next Book, l. 20.

So that myself were willing, to commence
A lab'rer at my farm? thou shalt not want
Sufficient wages; thou mayst there collect
Stones for my walls, and plant my thriving oaks,
For which I would supply thee through the year
With food, and clothes, and sandals for thy feet.
But thou hast learn'd less creditable arts,
Nor hast a will to work, preferring much,
By beggary from street to street t' obtain
Wherewith to feed thy never-sated maw.

Then answer, thus, Ulysses wise return'd:
Forbear, Eurymachus; for were we match'd
In work against each other, thou and I,
Mowing in spring-time, when the days are long,
I with a well-bent sickle in my grasp,
And thou with one in thine, for trial sake
Of our ability to toil unfed
Till night, grass still sufficing for the proof.—
Or if, again, it were our task to drive
Yok'd oxen of the noblest breed, sleek-hair'd,
Big-limb'd, both batten'd to the full with grass,
Their age and aptitude for work the same,
Not soon to be fatigu'd, and were the field
In size four acres, with a glebe through which
The share might smoothly slide, then shouldst thou see
How straight my furrow should be cut and true.—

Or should this day Saturnian Jove excite
Here battle, or elsewhere, and I were arm'd
With two bright spears and with a shield, and bore
A brazen casque well-fitted to my brows,
Me then thou shouldst perceive in fight engag'd
Amid the foremost chiefs, nor with the crime
Of idle begg'ry shouldst upbraid me more.
But thou art much a railer, one whose heart
No pity moves, and to thyself appear'st
A mighty man and valiant, for no cause,
But that thy social intercourse is small—
Thou hast few friends, and those of little worth.
But should Ulysses come, these ample doors
Should seem, at once, to thee too strait a pass,
To shoot thee forth with speed enough abroad.

He ceas'd—then tenfold indignation fir'd
Eurymachus; he furrow'd deep his brow
With frowns, and in wing'd accents thus replied:

Wretch! for this insolence, with which thou dar'st
Offend this num'rous company, myself
Will now requite thee well. Is wine the cause,
That thus thou speak'st, or wast thou born a fool?
Or thou art frantic haply with delight,
That thou hast foil'd yon vagabond obscure.

He said, and seiz'd a stool. Ulysses saw,
Not fearless of its flight, th' uplifted harm,

And at the knees of the Dulichian prince,
Amphinomus, an instant refuge sought.
He, therefore, in his stead, th' attendant struck,
Who bore the beaker; smitten from his hand
Down dropp'd the vessel, rang against the ground,
And with loud shrieks the suff'rer fell supine.
Then tumult loud arose; the gloomy roof
Resounded, and a suitor thus exclaim'd:

I would that, ere he caus'd such tumult here,
This mendicant had died! we now contend
Not for the queen, but for a beggar's sake,
And must despair, since thus we can dispute
For such a cause, that peace and social joy
Shall ever crown our banquets here again.

So he; and next amid them all arose
Telemachus himself, and thus he spake:
Sirs! ye are mad; forgetful of your wine,
And of your food alike; some angry God
Confounds you; finish therefore duly now
Your joyless feast, and seek your sev'ral homes,
At your own time, for none goes forc'd by me.

He ceas'd; they gnawing stood their lips, aghast
With wonder, that the prince had in his speech
Such freedom shown and boldness. Then arose
The son of Nisus, offspring of the king
Aretus, brave Amphinomus, and said—

My friends! let none with contradiction thwart,
And rude reply, words rational and just;
Cease; neither strike the stranger here, nor strike
A servant of renown'd Ulysses more,
But let some youth, attendant on the wine,
From right to left dispense it, that, a last
Libation made, we may retire to rest,
Each at his proper home, and leave the prince,
T' accommodate beneath his father's roof
The stranger, for the Prince's guest is he.

He ceas'd, whom all approv'd. The hero, then,
Dulichian Mulius *, herald of himself,
Amphinomus, a beaker charging high,
Serv'd all. They, pouring to the blessed Gods
Libation, drank; and when such measure each
Had ta'en as pleas'd him, sought their sev'ral homes.

* Mulius, although the servant of Amphinomus, is dignified with the appellation of hero, because he was a herald also, and all heralds were deemed sacred persons, and held in the highest honour by the ancients.

ARGUMENT OF THE NINETEENTH BOOK.

Ulysses and Telemachus remove the arms from the hall to an upper chamber. The hero then confers with Penelope, to whom he gives a fictitious narrative of his adventures. Euryclea, while she bathes Ulysses, discovers him by a scar on his knee, but he prevents her communication of that discovery to Penelope.

BOOK XIX.

THUS him the suitors in his palace left
Contriving with Minerva's aid fit means,
To slay them all, when to his son he said—
 Telemachus, we must dispose, my son !
All these our implements of war within ;
* And should the suitors, missing them, inquire

* These lines, to the end of the paragraph, were judged by the ancients to be here in their proper place, but not in the sixteenth book, where they occur in the first instance, with the addition of four more.—C.

Where are they? thou shalt answer calmly thus—
I have convey'd them from the reach of smoke,
For they appear no longer those, which erst
Ulysses, sailing hence for Ilium, left,
So smirch'd and sullied by the breath of fire.
This weightier reason (thou shalt also say)
Some God suggested to me,—lest, inflam'd
With wine, ye wound each other in your brawls,
Shaming both feast and courtship; for the view
Itself of arms incites to their abuse.

He ceas'd; and, at his word, th' obedient prince
Call'd Euryclea forth, his nurse, and said—

Nurse! shut the women close; while I remove
My father's arms, through long neglect of mine
In childhood, sullied by these smoky fires.
My chamber best will suit them, danger none
Of smoke is there, and thither shall they now.

Then thus the gentle matron in return:
I would, my son, that thou wouldst use the pow'r,
Which thy discretion gives thee, to control
And manage all! But their removal hence
If none may witness, who shall bear the light?

To whom Telemachus discreet replied:
This guest; for no man, at my table fed,
Come whence he may, shall be an idler here.

He ended, nor his words flew wing'd away,

But Euryclea bolted ev'ry door.

Then, starting to the task, Ulysses caught,
And his illustrious son, the weapons thence,
Helmet, and bossy shield, and pointed spear,
While Pallas from a golden lamp diffus'd
A beauteous light around them. At that sight
Alarm'd, the prince his father thus address'd :

Whence—whence is this, my father? I behold
A prodigy! the house on either side,
With all its num'rous arches, columns, beams,
Shines in my sight, as with the blaze of fire!
Some Pow'r celestial, doubtless, is within.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
Soft! ask no questions. Give no vent to thought.
Such is the custom of the Pow'rs divine.
Hence, thou, to rest. I stay, that I may move
And int'rest much thy mother, and provoke
Her women also; neither short nor made
With slight concern shall her inquiry prove.

He ended, and the prince, at his command,
Guided by flaming torches, sought the couch,
Where he was wont to sleep, and there he slept
On that night also, waiting the return
Of sacred dawn. Thus left, Ulysses, deep
In thought immers'd, sat framing fittest means,
By Pallas' aid, for slaughter of his foes.

At length, Diana-like, or like herself,
All-golden Venus (her apartment left),
Enter'd Penelope. Beside the hearth
Her women planted her accustom'd seat
With silver wreath'd and ivory. That throne
Icmalius form'd, and had with nicest art
A footstool to the splendid frame adjoin'd,
Which ever with an ample fleece they spread.
There sat discreet Penelope; then came
Her beautiful attendants from within,
Who soon displac'd the tables, and from each
The scatter'd food collected, and the cups,
From which those insolent companions drank.
Its embers next, from each inverted vase
They pour'd, and with fresh billets pil'd them high,
Both for illumination and for warmth.
Then yet again Melantho with rude speech
Opprobrious, thus, assail'd Ulysses' ear.

Hast thou resolv'd, then, stranger! to remain
All night a troublesome intruder here,
That thou mayst watch the women? Hence—abroad—
Glad of such fare as thou hast found, or soon
With torches beaten we will thrust thee forth.

To whom Ulysses, frowning stern, replied:
Why these invectives, mistress? and thy wrath—
Why thus pursues it me? for that my face

Shines not with oil? for that my garb is mean?
 For that I beg? to my distress impute
 These crimes; all mendicants commit the same.
 I also liv'd the rich possessor once
 Of such a stately mansion, and have giv'n
 To num'rous wand'ers, whencesoe'er they came,
 All that they needed; I was also serv'd
 By many, and enjoy'd whate'er denotes
 The envied owner opulent and blest.
 But Jove (for such his pleasure was) reduc'd
 My much to nought*. Thou, therefore, also fear,
 Lest, fairest of thy sister-menials now,
 Thou forfeit all those beauties; fear besides,
 Lest by some rudeness thou provoke the queen,
 And lest Ulysses come, of whose return
 Hope yet survives; but even though the chief
 Have perish'd, as ye think, and comes no more,
 Consider yet the prince; his growth; his age;
 Apollo's gifts; no woman here can hide,
 As erst she might, her trespass from his eye,
 For all his heedless years have pass'd away.

He ended, whom Penelope o'erheard,

* Ζεὺς γὰρ τοι τὸ τάλαντον ἐπιρρέπει ἄλλοτε ἄλλω
 Ἄλλοτε μὲν πλετεῖν, ἄλλοτε δ' ἔδεν ἔχειν.

Theogn. Gnom.—C.

Jove makes our scale, at pleasure, rise or fall,
 Now giving much, now stripping us of all.

And her attendant sharply thus rebuk'd :

Shameless, audacious woman! known to me
Is thy great wickedness, which with thy life
Thou shalt atone ; for thou wast well aware
(Hearing it from myself) that I design'd
This stranger's stay, for close inquiry's sake
Of my long lost and most lamented lord.

Then to her mistress of the stores she said—
Eurynome ! bring hither for the guest
A cover'd seat, for sitting he shall hear
And answer best my questions, like to prove
Not few, nor satisfied with short reply.

She spake ; Eurynome with brisk dispatch
A seat supplied with fleecy cover spread,
On which at once the toil-accustom'd chief
Reposing, thus Penelope began :

Stranger ! my first inquiry shall be this—
Who art thou ? whence ? where born, and sprung
from whom ?

Then answer thus Ulysses, wise, return'd :
O queen ! uncensurable by the lips
Of mortal man ! thy glory climbs the skies
Unrivall'd, like the praise of some great king,
Who, o'er a num'rous people and renown'd
Presiding like a Deity, maintains
Justice and truth. Their harvests overswell

The sower's hopes; their trees, o'erladen, scarce
 Their fruit sustain; no sickness thins the folds;
 The finny swarms of ocean crowd the shores,
 And all are rich and happy, for his sake*.
 Me therefore question of what else thou wilt
 In thy own palace, but forbear t' inquire
 From whom I sprang, and of my native land,
 Lest recollection of those tender themes
 Augment my woes; for I have much endur'd:

* Although Homer numbers a plentiful supply of fish among the blessings of a rich and happy people, Athenæus observes, that he never sets fish on the table. The poet, he says, frequently characterizes the Hellespont by the epithet *fishy*, he describes the Phæacians as a people altogether maritime, he was acquainted with the many havens of Ithaca and the isles in its neighbourhood, in which both *fish* and wild-fowl abounded, and has represented a sea well stored with *fish* as a circumstance of felicity; yet in no single instance does he set fish before his heroes.—C.

This whole passage has been imitated by Hesiod

Ἔργ. καὶ Ἡμερ. I, ver. 223.

Οἳ δὲ δίκας ξείνοισι καὶ ἐνδημοῖσι διδῶσιν

Ἰθείας, καὶ μὴ τι παρεκβαίνεισι δικαίῃς,

Τοῖσι τέθλε πόλιν, λαοὶ δ' ἀνθεῦσιν ἐν αὐτῇ.—

Τοῖσι φέρει μὲν γαῖα πολὺν εἶον· ἔρρει δὲ δρῦς

Ἀκρὴ μὲν τε φέρει θαλάσσης, μέσση δὲ μελίσσης·

Εἰροπόκοι δ' οἷες μαλλοῖς καταβεβρίθασι, &c.—C.

But they who both the stranger and their own
 Treat justly, nor o'erpass the bounds of right,
 Their city thrives, their citizens are blest,
 Their soil yields plentifully, acorns load
 Their topmost bough, while bees possess the trunk,
 And their flocks pant beneath a cumb'rous fleece.

Tears are forbidden us, and sighs, beneath
Another's roof; uninterrupted grief
Is evil; and thy women might suspect
(Perchance thyself), that wine too largely ta'en,
Not sorrow, caus'd the deluge of my tears.

Him answer'd then Penelope discreet:
Alas! my talents, stranger! and my charms
The Gods ordain'd should wither all and die,
When with the Greeks Ulysses sail'd to Troy.
Could he, returning, guide as he was wont,
My doubtful steps, I should at once display
More worth, and merit far superiour praise.
But grief now mars me, such perpetual storms
Have been my portion; for as many chiefs
As hold dominion in the neighbour isles,
Samos, Dulichium, and the forest-crown'd
Zacynthus; others, also, rulers here
In pleasant Ithaca, me, loth to wed,
Woo ceaseless, and my stores consume the while.
I therefore, neither guest nor suppliant heed,
Nor public herald more, but with regret
Of my Ulysses wear my soul away.
They mean-time press my nuptials, which by guile
I still procrastinate. Some God the thought
Suggested to me, to design a robe
Of amplest measure and of subtlest woof,

And thus t' address them, using no delay.
Princes, my suitors ! since the godlike chief
Ulysses is no more, enforce not now
My nuptials ; wait till I shall finish first
A fun'ral robe (lest all my threads decay)
Which for his royal father I prepare,
Laertes, looking for the mournful hour,
When ruthless Fate shall seize him for her own.
Else I the censure dread of all my sex,
Should he, so wealthy, want at last a shroud.
Thus speaking I prevail'd. Thenceforth I wove
All day that ample web, and by the blaze
Of torches, ravell'd it again at night.
Three years by this pretext deceiv'd, they ceas'd
To press me more ; but when the fourth arriv'd,
And the same season after many moons
And fleeting days return'd, then passing safe
The dogs, by these my careless women left
Still chain'd, they reach'd my chamber, my design
At once discern'd, and threaten'd fierce revenge.
Thus, through necessity, not choice, at length
Have I completed the laborious task,
Nor other specious plea can I devise,
Or refuge find, for day by day themselves
My parents urge my nuptials, and my son

(Of age to note it) with disgust observes
His wealth consum'd ; for abler youth than he,
To rule his house, or by the Gods endow'd
With more illustrious qualities, is none.
Yet, stranger, after all, speak thy descent ;
For whencesoe'er thou cam'st, nor ancient oak,
Nor hollow rock, I judge, gave birth to thee*.

Her answer'd then Ulysses, ever wise :
Unblemish'd consort of Laertes' son !
Resolv'st thou still to learn from whom I sprang ?
Learn then ; but know, that thou shalt much augment
My present grief, natural to a man,
Who hath, like me, long exil'd from his home,
Through various cities of the sons of men
Wander'd remote, and num'rous woes endur'd.
Yet will I tell thee, with what pain soe'er.

There is a land amid the sable flood,
Call'd Crete ; fair, fruitful, circled by the sea.
Num'rous are her inhabitants, a race
Not to be summ'd, and ninety towns she boasts†.

* When a man's birth or his ancestry could not be traced, or for reasons of his own he chose to conceal them, he was said to be descended either from the oaks or rocks. The expression was proverbial.—B. & C.

† The poet, who here ascribes only ninety, in the catalogue ascribes to Crete a hundred cities ; the reason is said to be, that, after the Trojan war, the return of Idomeneus to his home being

Various their speech is ; some Achaians are,
 And some indigenous ; Cydonians these,
 Those Dorians ; others of Pelasgian race.
 One city far in size the rest exceeds,
 Cnossus ; a city sway'd by Minos erst,
 Who, ever at a nine-years-close, conferr'd
 With Jove himself* ; from him my father sprang,
 Deucalion ; and Deucalion's consort bore
 Two sons, Idomeneus the king, and me.
 To Troy my royal brother with the sons
 Of Atreus sail'd. The youngest born am I ;
 Not more behind Idomeneus in years,
 Than in renown, and Æthon is my name.
 There I beheld and entertain'd beneath
 My roof, Ulysses ; for a furious wind
 Had driv'n him from Malea (while he sought

opposed by Leucus his adopted son, to whom he had delegated the throne in his absence, ten cities were destroyed in the contest.

Others say, that the epithet *ἐκατόμπολις* is not to be understood precisely, but as a general term signifying only a great number of cities.—B. & C.

* Minos, the son of Jupiter and Europa, was fabulously reported to visit always at the end of nine years his omniscient father, that he might receive from him instructions in the art of government, in which accordingly he became so expert, that after his death he was appointed chief judge of the wicked.—B. & C.

The ground of the fable, according to Casaubon, was, that every nine years he revised his laws and corrected them.—C.

The shores of Troy) to Crete. His barks he moor'd
Within the stream Amnisus, for the cave
Of Ilithya known, a dang'rous port,
Where scarce, at last, his fleet escap'd the storm.
He, landing, instant to the city went,
Seeking Idomeneus, of whom he spake
As of a friend long-known and much esteem'd.
But *he* was far remote, ten days advanc'd,
Perhaps eleven, on his course to Troy.
Beneath my roof he, therefore, found his home
(A plenteous one himself), and for his band
By public contribution I procur'd
Corn, wine, and beeves, till they could wish no more.
Twelve days his noble Grecians there abode,
Port-lock'd by Boreas blowing with a force
Resistless even on the land, some God
So rous'd his fury; but the thirteenth day
The wind all fell, and forth they sail'd again.

With many a specious fiction, thus he sooth'd
Her list'ning ear*; she, melting at the sound,
With drops of tend'rest grief her cheeks bedew'd;
And as the snow, by Zephyrus diffus'd,

* The original line is observed by Strabo to be justly descriptive of all that Homer has invented, who, as Aristotle remarks, has given an example to all writers who deal in fiction, how they ought to feign, mingling truth with falsehood, and making falsehood look like truth.—C.

Melts on the mountain tops, when Eurus breathes,
 And fills the channels of the running streams,
 So melted she, and down her lovely cheeks
 Pour'd fast the tears, him mourning as remote
 Who sat beside her*. Soft compassion touch'd
 Ulysses of his consort's silent wo ;
 Yet wept not he, but well-dissembling still,
 Suppress'd his grief, fast rivetting his eyes,
 As they were each of horn or hammer'd steel,
 Till she, with overflowing tears at length
 Sate, replied, and thus inquir'd again :

Now, stranger ! mark me well ; now prove thy truth.
 If thou, indeed, hast entertain'd in Crete
 My spouse and his brave followers, as thou say'st,
 Describe his raiment and himself ; his own
 Appearance, and the appearance of his friends.

Then her Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise :
 Hard is the task, O queen ! (so long a time

* The original word signifying *to melt* is used thrice in the course of this short passage, on which Hermogenes observes, that, when there is an appropriate term for a thing, and that term perfectly intelligible, it is not well to ramble in quest of another. He who does, may discover indeed his command of language, but the variety he gains by it is unseasonable, and destroys the energy of his diction.

Homer knew this, and though he could easily have substituted another term, he would not. How can snow disappear better than by *melting* ? or what word could better express the tenderness of Penelope?—C.

Hath since elaps'd) to tell thee. Twenty years
Have pass'd since he forsook my native isle,
Yet, from my best remembrance, I will give
A likeness of him, such as now I may.
A double cloak, thick-pil'd, Mœonian-dy'd,
The noble chief had on; two golden clasps
Secur'd it, and the clasps display'd in front
A well-wrought pattern with much art design'd*.
A hound between his forefeet holding fast
A dappled fawn, gap'd eager on his prey.
All wonder'd, seeing how, in lifeless gold
Express'd, the dog with open mouth her throat
Attempted still, and how the fawn, with hoofs
Thrust trembling forward, still essay'd to fly.
That glorious mantle much I notic'd, soft
To touch, as the dried garlick's glossy film;
Such was the smoothness of it, and it shone
Sun-bright; full many a maiden, trust me, view'd
The splendid texture with admiring eyes.
But mark me now; deep treasure in thy mind
This word. I know not if Ulysses wore
That cloak at home, or whether of his train

* Hence Barnes observes on the great antiquity of Mosaic work among the Grecians, derived originally from the Sidonians, the Hebrews, the Ægyptians, and secondarily from the Medes and Persians, and the people of India.

Some warrior gave it to him on his way,
Or else some host of his; for many lov'd
Ulysses, and with him might few compare.
I gave to him, myself, a brazen sword,
A purple cloak magnificent, and vest
Of royal length, and, when he sought his bark,
With princely pomp dismiss'd him from the shore.
A herald also waited on the chief,
Somewhat his senior; him I next describe:
His back was bunch'd; his visage swarthy; curl'd
All o'er his fleecy poll; and he was nam'd
Eurybates; Ulysses' nearest friend,
And of a mind congenial with his own.

He ceas'd; she, conscious of the proofs, with tears
More copious still confess'd them genuine all,
And when at length tears fail'd her, thus replied:

Till now my guest for pity's sake, henceforth
Such shalt thou be for friendship's dearer sake.
I folded for him with these hands the cloak,
Which thou describ'st, produc'd it when he went,
And gave it to him; I that splendid clasp
Attach'd to it myself, t' adorn the more
My godlike husband, who shall never reach
His native home, nor tread these shores again;
Hard, therefore, was his lot, that e'er he sail'd.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:

Unblemish'd consort of Laertes' son !
No longer pine with needless grief, nor vex
Thy gentle heart for lost Ulysses' sake.
And yet I blame thee not ; a wife depriv'd
Of her first mate, to whom she had produc'd
Fair fruit of mutual love, would mourn his loss,
Although of worth inferiour far to thine,
Whom fame affirms the semblance of the Gods.
But cease to mourn ; for I will now relate
A faithful tale, nor will from thee withhold
Such tidings of Ulysses living still,
And of his homeward course, as I have heard
Not distant far, but in the neighbour land
Of the Thesprotians. He returns enrich'd
With many precious stores, from those obtain'd,
Whom he hath visited ; but he hath lost,
Departing from Thrinacia's isle, his bark,
And all his lov'd companions, in the Deep,
For Jove was adverse to him, and the Sun,
Whose beeves his followers slew. They perish'd all
Amid the billowy flood ; but him, the keel
Bestriding of his bark, the waves at length
Cast forth on the Phæacians' land, a race
From Neptune sprung, who rev'renc'd like a God
Thy husband, honour'd him with num'rous gifts,
And offer'd him, themselves, safe passage home.

Ulysses, therefore, had attain'd long since
His native shore, but that he deem'd it best
To travel far, that he might still amass
More wealth ; so far he passes all mankind
In gainful arts, in which no peer hath he.
This knowledge from Thesprotia's king I gain'd,
From gen'rous Phidon ; to myself he swore
In his own house, the goblet in his hand,
That both the bark was launch'd, and all her crew
Then waiting to conduct him to his home.
But me he first dismiss'd ; for, as it chanc'd,
A galley of Thesprotia lay prepar'd,
To seek Dulichium ; many a chest was there
With treasures of Ulysses fill'd, a store
To feed the house of an inferiour prince
To the tenth generation ; so immense
His riches were within that palace lodg'd.
Of him he spake as to Dodona gone,
T' implore Jove's counsel in his oaken bow'rs,
Whether, so late returning, he should seek
His kingdom openly, or in disguise.
Him, therefore, deem secure ; nor distant far,
Nor doom'd to longer exile from his home
And from his friends. I swear a solemn oath.
First Jove be witness, King and Lord of all !
Next these domestic Gods of the renown'd

Ulysses, in whose royal house I sit,
That thou shalt see my saying all fulfill'd.
Ulysses shall this self-same year return,
This self-same month, ere yet the next begin.

Him answer'd then Penelope discreet:
Fail not this word of thine, my friend! and soon
I will enrich thee so, that all who meet
Or but behold thee, shall pronounce thee blest.
But ah! my soul forebodes far other end;
Neither Ulysses will return, nor thou
Receive safe conduct hence; for we have here
None, such as once Ulysses was, to rule
His household with authority, and to send
With honourable convoy to his home
The worthy guest, or to regale him here.
Give him the bath, my maidens; spread his couch
With linen soft, with fleecy gaberlines*,
And rugs of splendid hue, that he may lie
Waiting, well-warm'd, the golden morn's return.
At early dayspring also serve him well
With bath and unction, that, his seat resum'd
Here in the palace, he may be prepar'd
For breakfast with Telemachus; and wo
Be that man's portion, who shall incommode

* A gaberline is a shaggy cloak of coarse but warm materials.
Such always make part of Homer's bed-furniture.

Or cause him pain; for him will I cashier
 Next moment, burn his anger as it may.
 For whence, my guest! should thy belief arise,
 That I deserve past other of my sex
 The praise of wisdom, if unbath'd, unoil'd,
 Ill-clad, thou sojourn here? man's life is short.
 Whoe'er is cruel, and to cruel arts
 Addicted, all on him, while yet he lives,
 Call plagues and curses down, and after death
 Scorn and proverbial mock'ries hunt his name.
 But the benevolent and just, who treats
 The stranger kindly, from his lips obtains
 A good report, which others, where he dwells,
 With pleasure hear, and further still diffuse*.

Her answer'd, then, Ulysses ever-wise:
 Unblemish'd consort of Laertes' son!
 Warm gaberdines and rugs of splendid hue
 To me have odious been, since first the sight
 Of Crete's snow-mantled mountain-tops I lost,
 Sweeping the billows with extended oars.
 No; let me pass, as I am wont to pass,
 The sleepless night; for on a sordid couch

* The brevity of human life is mentioned as a reason, why man should be diligent to secure to himself the good opinion of others, that his fame surviving him he may seem to live the longer. This passage is recommended very pathetically by Barnes to the especial notice of the rich and powerful.

Outstretch'd, full many a night have I repos'd,
Till golden-chariotted Aurora dawn'd.
Nor me the foot-bath pleases more ; my foot
Shall none of all thy minist'ring maidens touch,
Unless there be some ancient matron grave
Among them, who hath pangs of heart endur'd
Num'rous, and keen as I have felt myself ;
Her I refuse not. She may touch my feet*.

Then answer thus Penelope return'd :
Dear guest ! for of all trav'lers here arriv'd
From distant regions, have I none receiv'd
Prudent as thou, nor whom for his discreet
And faultless manners I have more esteem'd,
I have a matron even to thy wish,
Who, when my poor ill-fated lord was born,
Receiv'd and nurs'd him ; she shall wash thy feet,
Though now scarce able.—Euryclea, rise !

* The scholiast informs us, that the original lines corresponding with these four were rejected by the ancients ; and Eustathius rejects them likewise, deeming it unlike Ulysses, to frustrate his own design of secrecy by choosing a woman to wash his feet, who could hardly fail to discover him. Spondanus is of opinion, that, foreseeing the services she might render him, he chose her on purpose, that she might discover him. But Barnes's judgement on the passage seems the soundest, who thinks, that the poet means to represent Ulysses as forgetful of the scar, till his recollection of it comes too late, when, as his only remedy, he turns himself from the light. Thus understood, the whole is consistent, natural, and probable.—C.

Wash one coeval with thy lord; for such
The feet and hands, I doubt not, are become
Of our Ulysses, now; since man, beset
With sorrow once, soon wrinkled grows and old.
She said, then Euryclea with both hands
Cov'ring her face, in tepid tears profuse
Dissolv'd, and thus in mournful strains began:

Alas! my son, affliction for thy sake
Distracts me. Surely Jove of all mankind
Most hated thee, though piety like thine
He found not oft; for never mortal man
So many thighs of fatted victims burn'd,
And chosen hecatombs produc'd as thou,
To Jove the Thund'rer, him entreating still,
That he would grant thee a serene old age,
And to instruct, thyself, the prince, thy son.
Yet thus the God requites thee, cutting off
All hope of thy return—oh ancient sir!
Him too, perchance, where'er he sits a guest
Beneath some foreign roof, the women taunt,
As all these shameless ones have taunted thee,
Fearing whose mock'ry thou forbidd'st their hands
This office, which Icarius' daughter wise
To me consigns, and which I, glad, perform.
Yes; not for her sake only, but for thine,
This task will I perform; for thou hast rais'd

A tempest in my soul. Hear now the cause!
Full many a guest forlorn we shelter here,
But none of all hath in his form and size,
In shapely feet, in deep and mellow voice
Such likeness of Ulysses shown as thou.

To whom Ulysses, ever shrewd, replied:
Such close similitude, O ancient dame!
As thou perceiv'st between us, all alike,
Who have beheld us both, have ever found.

He said : then taking the resplendent vase
Allotted always to that use, she first
Infus'd cold water largely, then the warm.
Ulysses (for beside the hearth he sat)
Turn'd hastily toward the shade, alarm'd
Lest, handling him, she should at once remark
His scar, and all his stratagem unveil.
She then, approaching, minister'd the bath
To her own king, and at first touch discern'd
That token, by a savage boar of old
Impress'd, what time he to Parnassus went,
To visit there Autolycus and his sons,
His mother's noble sire, who far-excell'd
In furtive arts and oaths all humankind*.

* Autolycus, the son of Mercury according to the scholiast, was a most dexterous thief, after the example of his father ; and so ingenious both in stealing and in hiding what he had stolen, that he amassed

For such endowments he by gift receiv'd
From Hermes' self, whom with the thighs of lambs
And kids he gratified, and, in return,
The watchful Hermes never left his side.
He, visiting Laertes on a time,
Then king in Ithaca, the new-born son
Of his own daughter found, whom on his knees
At close of supper Euryclea plac'd,
And thus the royal visitant address'd:

Thyself, Autolycus! devise a name
For this thy daughter's son, by num'rous pray'rs
Of thine and fervent, from the Gods obtain'd.

Then answer thus Autolycus return'd:
My daughter and my daughter's spouse! the name,
Which I shall give your boy, that let him bear.
Since, after much success at other's cost,

great riches. The poet, however, seems rather to applaud, than to censure his practice; on which account Plato cautions his disciples against the passage; telling them, that they are in danger of learning from Homer, who evidently approves the conduct and character of Autolycus, that honesty and thievery may consist together, and that, provided a man pilfers only from his enemies for the benefit of himself and his friends, no great harm is done.—C.

Homer's morals seem to allow to a good man dissimulation, and even an ambiguous oath, should they be necessary to save him from a villain. Thus in Book XX Telemachus swears by Zeus, that he does not hinder his mother from marrying whom she pleases of the wooers, though at the same time he is plotting their destruction with his father.—F.

And much hostility provok'd, I come,
Call him Odusseus* ; and, in future time,
When he shall visit, at an age mature
My mansion in Parnassus, where, of late,
His mother dwelt, and where my treasures lie,
Rich will I send him thence, and joyful home.

Ulysses, therefore, that he might obtain
Those princely gifts, went thither. Him arriv'd
With right-hand gratulation and with words
Of welcome kind, Autolycus receiv'd,
Nor less his offspring ; but the mother most
Of his own mother clung around his neck,
Amphithea ; she with many a fervent kiss
His forehead press'd, and his bright-beaming eyes.
Then bade Autolycus his noble sons
Set forth a banquet. They, at his command,
A bullock introduc'd, five years his age,
Which flaying first, they spread him carv'd abroad,
Then scor'd his flesh, transfix'd it with the spits,
And roasting all with culinary skill,
Gave each a share. Thus, sitting, they prolong'd
All day the feast, and till the sun declin'd ;

* To call him Ulysses here (a name without meaning) when Autolycus calls him Odusseus for the sake of its meaning, would be not to translate, but to misrepresent the poet. Odusseus is immediately derived from the verb *Odussaô*, *I am angry*.

But when the sun declin'd, and darkness fell,
Each sought his couch, and took the gift of sleep.
Then, soon as day-spring's daughter, rosy-palm'd
Aurora, look'd abroad, forth went the hounds,
And, with the hounds, Ulysses and the youths,
Sons of Autolycus, to chase the boar.
Arriv'd at the Parnassian mount, they climb'd
The bushy sides, and to the loftiest lairs
Erelong attain'd. It was the pleasant hour,
When, from the gently-swelling flood profound
Emerging bright, the sun first smote the fields.
The hunters scour'd the thickets; foremost ran
The questing hounds, behind them came the youths,
Sons of Autolycus, with whom advanc'd
The illustrious prince, Ulysses, pressing close
The hounds, and brandishing his massy spear.
There, hid in thickest shades, a huge boar lay.
That covert neither rough winds blowing moist
Could penetrate, nor could the noonday sun
Smite through it, or fast-falling show'rs prevade,
So thick it was, and underneath, the ground
With litter of dry foliage strew'd profuse.
Hunters and dogs approaching him, his ear
The sound of feet perceiv'd; upridging high
His bristly spine, and glaring fire, he sprang
Forth from the shrubs, and in defiance stood

Near and right opposite. Ulysses first
Assail'd him with his elevated spear,
Ardent to wound him, but the boar, his thrust
Preventing, gall'd him first above the knee.
Much flesh, obliquely striking him, he tore
With his rude tusk, yet reach'd not to the bone.
But him Ulysses piercing in the brawn
Of his right shoulder, urg'd his weapon through.
He, screaming, fell and died. With instant haste
Around Ulysses his companions throng'd;
With dext'rous promptitude, his wound they brac'd,
With chanted charms * restrain'd the sable blood,
And sought at once their home; thence, soon as heal'd,
His hosts, rejoicing in his cure, dismiss'd
Their happy guest, enrich'd with many a gift.
His parents, in his native isle, with joy
Their son receiv'd, and of his hurt inquir'd;
He told them all the truth—how while he scour'd
The thickets of Parnassus with his friends,
Sons of Autolycus, a savage boar
Impress'd the deep memorial with his tooth.

That scar, while chafing him with open palms,
The matron knew; she left his foot to fall;

* Hæmorrhages, gout, sciatica, and all sorts of sprains were supposed by the ancients to be curable by song, when once the patient found himself capable of attending to it.—B. & C.

Down dropp'd his leg into the vase ; the brass
Rang, and, o'ertilted by the sudden shock,
Pour'd forth the water, flooding wide the floor.
Her spirit joy at once and sorrow seiz'd ;
Tears fill'd her eyes ; her intercepted voice
Died in her throat ; but, with a trembling hand
Stretch'd forth to clasp his beard, at length she spake :

Thou art himself, Ulysses. O my son !
Dear to me, and my master as thou art,
I knew thee not, till I had touch'd the scar*.

She said, and right toward the queen her eyes
Directed, all impatient to declare
Her own Ulysses even then at home.
But she, though seated opposite, immers'd
In deepest thought by Pallas, neither heard
Nor aught observ'd of all. Then, seizing fast
Her throat with his right hand, and with his left
Pressing her nearer on himself, he said :

* Dionysius Halicar. was so charmed with the poet's whole description of this incident, that while we contemplate it, he says, we rather seem to view a picture, than to read a poem, and accounts them not much mistaken, who shall affirm, that the best lessons in his art any where to be found, a painter may find in Homer. And Cicero's opinion of his descriptive powers was equally honourable to him, as appears from what he says on the subject in his *Tusculan Disputations*, L. v, S. 39, where, noticing the blindness of the bard, and his faculty of making all things clearly seen by his readers, he expresses himself with rapturous admiration.—C.

Nurse! why wouldst thou destroy me? From thy
breast

The milk, that fed me, flow'd. Much grief, much toil
Have I sustain'd, and in the twentieth year
Regain my country. Thou hast learn'd the truth;
Such was the will of Heav'n. But hush—be still—
Lest others also learn it from thy lips.
For this I say, nor shall the threat be vain;
If God, propitious, grant me to destroy
Those suitors, when I shall my wrongs avenge
On all these worthless ones, who serve the queen,
Although my nurse, thyself shalt also die.

Him answer'd Euryclea then, discreet:
What speaks my son! How scap'd that dreadful word
Thy guarded lips; my faithfulness of old
Thou know'st, and even now shalt prove me firm
As iron, secret as the stubborn rock.
But hear and mark me well. Shouldst thou prevail,
By Pow'r divine assisted, to destroy
The haughty suitors, I will then, myself,
Teach thee to judge the women, and discern
Th' unfaithful many from the duteous few.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
Nurse! wherefore this? Instruction none I need,
Sufficient of myself. Hold thou thy peace.
Be that thy part, and leave the rest to Heav'n.

He spake; then, leaving him, forth went the nurse,

That she might serve him with a second bath,
For the whole first was spilt. Thus, lav'd at length,
And smooth'd with oil, Ulysses nearer pull'd
His seat toward the glowing hearth, t' enjoy
More warmth, and drew his tatters o'er the scar.
When, prudent, thus Penelope began :

One question, stranger, I shall yet propound,
Though brief; for soon the hour of soft repose
Sweet even to the most forlorn, on whom
Sleep sheds his grateful influence, will arrive.
But measure none hath Heav'n to my distress
Assign'd; my sole delight is to consume
My days in sighs, while here retir'd I sit,
Tasking my women, and myself employ'd;
But (night return'd, and all to bed retir'd)
I press mine also, yet with deep regret
And anguish lacerated, even there.
As when at spring's first entrance, her sweet song
The azure-crested nightingale renews,
Daughter of Pandareus; within the grove's
Thick foliage perch'd, she pours her echoing voice
Now deep, now clear, with ever-varied strains
Deploring Itylus, whom she destroy'd
(Her son by royal Zethus) unaware*,

* Her name was Aëdon. She intended to slay the son of her husband's brother Amphion, incited to it by envy of his wife, who

So changeful are my thoughts, while here I muse
Uncertain, whether I shall still remain
For my son's sake at home, a faithful guard
Of his and mine, house, women, household-stores,
My spotless honour, and my nuptial bed,
Or whether of my wooers I shall choose
Who noblest seems, and offers richest dow'r.
My son, while infant and of heedless years,
Would not that I should leave him and forsake
His father's home ; but now, to manhood thriv'n,
He ev'n entreats me to depart, incens'd
For his fair patrimony thus consum'd.
But I have dream'd. Hear, and expound my dream.
My geese are twenty, which within my walls
I feed with sodden wheat ; they serve to amuse
Sometimes my sorrow. From the mountains came
An eagle huge, hook-beak'd, brake all their necks,
And slew them ; scatter'd on the palace-floor
They lay, and he soar'd swift into the skies.
Dream only as it was, I wept aloud,
Till all my maidens, gather'd by my voice,
Arriving, found me weeping still, and still
Complaining, that an eagle had at once
Slain all my geese. But, to the palace-roof

had six children, while herself had only two, but through mistake she slew her own son Itylus, and for her punishment was transformed by Jupiter into a nightingale.—B. & C.

Stooping again, he sat, and, with a voice
Of human sound, my tears forbidding, said—

Take courage, daughter of the glorious chief
Icarius ! no vain dream hast thou beheld,
But, in thy sleep, a truth. The slaughter'd geese
Denote thy suitors, and myself who seem
An eagle in thy sight, am yet indeed
Thy husband, who have now, at last, return'd,
Death, horrid death designing for them all.

He said ; then waking at the voice, I cast
An anxious look around, and saw my geese
Beside their tray, all feeding as before.

Her then Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise :
O queen ! interpretation cannot err,
Unless perversely, since Ulysses' self
So plainly spake th' event. Sure death impends
O'er ev'ry suitor, he shall slay them all.

To whom Penelope discreet replied :
Dreams are inexplicable, O my guest !
And ofttimes mere delusions, that receive
No just accomplishment. Two sev'ral gates
Transmit those airy phantoms. One of horn,
And of sawn iv'ry one*. Such dreams as pass

* The differences of the two substances may perhaps serve to account for the preference given in this case to the gate of horn ; horn being transparent, and as such emblematical of truth, while ivory, from its whiteness, promises light, but is, in fact, opaque. F.

The gate of ivory, prove empty sounds,
While others, through the polish'd horn effus'd,
Whose eye soe'er they visit, never fail.
But thence, methinks, that awful dream of mine
Came not; thrice welcome were it else to me,
And to my son. Now mark my words; attend.
The dreaded morn appears, which sends me far
From this lov'd home for ever. To decide
Their rival claims, this day shall I produce
Twelve rings inserted in twelve pointed stakes,
Which, set by line, like galley-ribs, his mark
Ofttimes Ulysses made, and, from afar,
Would speed his well-aim'd arrow through them all.
Such is the test to which I shall invite
This day the suitors. Him who soonest bends
The stubborn bow, and with successful aim
His keen shafts levelling, thrids all the rings,
I follow, this dear mansion of my youth
Leaving, so fair, so fill'd with ev'ry good,
Though still to love it even in my dreams.

Her answer'd then Ulysses, ever-wise:
Unblemish'd consort of Laertes' son!
Delay not; bring them instant to the proof;
For ere long-lab'ring they prevail to bend
That bow so stubborn, and to speed the shaft
Through those twelve rings, Ulysses will arrive.

To whom Penelope, discreet, replied :
Couldst thou, my guest ! unwearied, still console
And sooth me thus, these wakeful lids of mine
Should never close ; but sleep is by the will
And ord'nance of the Gods, and to resist
Sleep always, far exceeds all pow'r of Man.
I, therefore, seeking my recess above,
Will lay me, sighing, down on my sad couch,
Moist with my tears, e'er since Ulysses went
To that bad city, never to be nam'd.
There will I sleep ; but sleep thou here below,
Either thyself preparing on the ground
Thy couch, or on a couch by these prepar'd.

So saying, not sole, but with her female train
Attendant on her steps, ascending thence
She sought her stately chamber ; there arriv'd,
She mourn'd her lov'd Ulysses, till at length,
By Pallas shed, soft slumbers seal'd her eyes.

ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTIETH BOOK.

Ulysses, doubting whether he shall destroy or not the women servants, who commit lewdness with the suitors, resolves at length to spare them for the present. He asks an omen from Jupiter, and that he would grant him also to hear some propitious words from the lips of one in the family. His petitions are both answered. Preparation is made for the feast. Whilst the suitors sit at table, Pallas smites them with a horrid frenzy. Theoclymenus, observing the strange effects of it, prophesies their destruction, and they deride his prophecy.

BOOK XX.

BUT in the vestibule the godlike chief,
Ulysses, lay. The fleeces of his sheep,
Slain by the suitors, o'er a bullock's hide
New-stripp'd he cast, then press'd his hasty couch
And cover'd by the dame, his ancient nurse,
With a warm mantle, meditating lay

Wo to his enemies. Mean-time, the train
Of women wonted to the suitors' arms,
All sought their sev'ral mates, and, as they went,
Titt'ring and jesting lewdly, fill'd his heart
With doubts tumultuous, whether then at once
To slay, or to permit them yet to give
Their lusty paramours one last embrace.
As growls the mastiff standing on the start
For battle, if a stranger's foot approach
Her cubs new-whelp'd—so growl'd Ulysses' heart,
While wonder fill'd him at their impious deeds.
But, smiting on his breast, he thus reprov'd
The mutinous inhabitant within.

Heart! bear it. Worse than this thou didst endure,
What time, invincible by force of man,
The Cyclops on thy brave companions fed.
Then thou wast patient, though a thousand fears
Possess'd thee, till thy wisdom set thee free.

His own heart thus he disciplin'd, which bore
With firmness the restraint, and in his breast
Rebell'd not; yet he turn'd from side to side.
As when some hungry swain o'er glowing coals
A paunch for food prepares, from side to side
He turns it oft, and scarce abstains the while;
So he from side to side roll'd, pond'ring deep,
How likeliest with success he might assail

Those shameless suitors ; one to many oppos'd*.

Then Pallas, stooping from the skies, in form

A woman, o'er the musing hero's head

Her station took, and thus the Goddess spake :

Why sleep'st thou not, unhappiest of mankind ?

Thou art at home ; here dwells thy wife, and here

Thy son ; a son, whom all might wish their own.

Whom thus Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise :

O Goddess ! just is all that thou hast said ;

But, not without solicitude, I muse,

How, with success, alone I shall assail

My shameless, num'rous, never-failing guests,

The suitors ; this thought pains me ; but a thought,

* Spondanus understands the simile as designed to illustrate the quickness and variety of thought, with which Ulysses was exercised, while in quest of an expedient to slay the suitors. Madame Dacier supposes his burning impatience to be the point of comparison, but Clarke the restless motion of his body merely ; and if Homer may be allowed the best interpreter of his own meaning, Clarke is certainly right ; for the frequent turnings of Ulysses on his bed are the only circumstance to which he applies it.

The simile has been censured by many as mean, and tending to degrade the hero. Eustathius vindicates it on the ground of the hero's assumed character, which is that of a mendicant.—C. But though he is believed to be such by all about him, to the reader he is known to be Ulysses ; if therefore no better plea can be urged in its favour, it must be given up. A far better however will be soon found, if, divesting himself of false delicacy, the reader will consider its simplicity ; how natural is it, how apposite, and how forcibly it impresses the subject.

Still weightier, more. If, through your sov'reign aid
(Thine and thy Father's), I should slay them all,
How shall myself escape? O Goddess! think*.

To whom the blue-ey'd Goddess in reply :
O void of faith! a mortal man will trust
His friend, though mortal, and in valour less
And wisdom than himself; but I, who keep
Thee in all difficulties, am divine.
I tell thee plainly. Were we throng'd around
By fifty bands, all ambush'd, and prepar'd
To slay thee, thou shouldst yet securely drive
The flocks and cattle of them all away.
But yield to sleep's soft influence; sleepless nights
Themselves are painful, and ere long, be sure,
Thou shalt emerge from under all thy woes.

So saying, o'er Ulysses' eyes she shed
Soft slumbers, and when sleep, that soothes the mind,
And nerves the limbs afresh, had seiz'd him once,
Departing, sought th' Olympian heights again.
But his chaste spouse awaking, wept reclin'd
On her soft couch, and, noblest of her sex,
Sate at length with tears, her pray'r address'd
To Dian first of all the Pow'rs above.

Diana! virgin Goddess! sprung from Jove!

* That is, how shall I escape the vengeance of their kindred?

I would that with a shaft this moment sped
Into my bosom, thou wouldst here conclude
My mournful life ! or, O that, as it flies,
Snatching me through the pathless air, a storm
Would whelm me deep in Ocean's restless tide !
So sudden tempests caught the daughters fair
Of Pandareus away * ; their parents died
By wrath divine, and they were left forlorn ;
But Venus nourish'd them with curds, with wine,
And honey ; Juno gave them to surpass
All women both in feature and in mind ;
With graceful stature eminent thyself
Didst deign to bless them ; and, in female tasks
Ingenious, Pallas with superiour skill.
But when the foam-sprung Goddess to the skies
A suitress went on their behalf, to obtain
Blest nuptials for them from the Thund'rer Jove
(For Jove the happiness, himself, appoints,
And the unhappiness of all below),
Mean-time, swift Harpies ravishing away
Those virgins, gave them to the Furies Three,
That they might serve them †. O that me the Gods

* Aëdon, Cleothera, Merope.—B. & C.

† We have here a different history given us of Aëdon, who in Book xix (see the note on line 634), is said to have been trans-

Inhabiting Olympus so would hide
From human eyes, or Dian strike me dead !
That while Ulysses yet hath all my thoughts,
My days concluded, I might scape the pain
Of gratifying some inferiour chief !
This is supportable, when (all the day
To sorrow giv'n) the mourner sleeps at night ;
For sleep, if once it veil the tearful eye,
All reminiscence blots of all alike,
Both good and ill ; but me the Gods afflict
Not seldom ev'n in dreams, and at my side
This night the likeness of Ulysses lay,
Such as myself beheld him when he sail'd
With his brave Ithacans ; my bounding heart
No fleeting dream believ'd it, but a truth.

While thus she spake, in orient gold enthron'd
Came forth the morn. Ulysses, at the voice,

formed into a nightingale. In his comment on this passage the scholiast tells us, that Pandareus, son of Merops and the nymph Orea, having married Harmathœe, daughter of Amphidamas, by her had three daughters, Aëdon, Cleothera, and Merope. Their father, arriving in Crete, stole a dog belonging to Jupiter from his temple, and in punishment of that crime it was, that he and his wife were slain, and their three children disposed of as Penelope here mentions.—B. & C.

It seems strange, that two such very different catastrophes should be related of the same person ; to attempt either to reconcile or to account for them would be a vain labour.

Wellnigh believ'd himself already known,
 And that his wife stood weeping at his side.
 He started, gather'd in his arms the cloak
 And fleeces, plac'd them on a seat within,
 But carried forth the ranker hide abroad,
 Where thus, with lifted hands to Jove, he pray'd :

Eternal Sire ! if, after num'rous woes
 By land and on the Deep, I reach, at length,
 With full consent of Heav'n my native home,
 Vouchsafe me, from the lips of one awake
 Within these walls, an omen, and bid sound
 Thy own peculiar signal from above.

Such pray'r he made, and Jove omniscient heard.
 Sudden he thunder'd from the radiant heights
 Olympian ; glad, Ulysses heard the sound.
 A woman next, then lab'ring at the mill
 Hard by, where all his num'rous mills he kept
 Gave him the sign propitious from within.
 Twelve damsels toil'd to turn them, day by day,
 Meal grinding some of barley, some of wheat,
 Marrow of man*. The rest (their portion ground)
 All slept ; one only from her task as yet
 Ceas'd not, for she was feeblest of them all ;
 She rested on her mill, and thus pronounc'd

* μυελὸν ἀνδρῶν.

Unconscious for whose sake, th' auspicious word :

Jove, Father, Governor of Heav'n and Earth !

Loud thou hast thunder'd from the starry skies

By no cloud veil'd ; a sign propitious, giv'n

To whom I know not ; but O grant the pray'r

Of a poor bondwoman ! appoint their feast

This day the last, that in Ulysses' house

The suitors shall enjoy, for whom I drudge,

Grinding, to weariness of heart and limb,

Meal for their use. Here feast they never more !

She ended, and the list'ning chief receiv'd

With equal joy both signs, convinc'd by both,

That he should punish soon those guilty men.

And now, returning to their sev'ral tasks,

The women on the palace-hearth renew'd

Its sprightly blaze, and from his couch arose

Godlike Telemachus ; he, soon attir'd,

His belted falchion o'er his shoulder slung,

Bound his bright sandals, grasp'd his sturdy spear

Steel-pointed, and, advancing to the porch,

Of Euryclea thence aloud inquir'd :

Nurse ! have ye with respectful notice serv'd

Our guest ? or hath he found a sordid couch

E'en where he might ? for, prudent though she be,

Sometimes my mother errs ; with kindness treats

The worthless and the worthy with neglect.

He ceas'd, and Euryclea thus replied :

Son ! blame not her, who merits now no blame.

The guest sat drinking till he would no more,

And ate, till, question'd, he replied—Enough.

And when the hour invited to repose

Herself and him, she gave her women charge,

To spread his couch. Yet he, like one forlorn,

And, through despair, indiff'rent to himself,

Both bed and rugs refus'd, and in the porch

On fleeces slept, and on a raw rank hide,

Beneath a cloak cast over him by me.

She ceas'd ; then, grasping his bright-headed spear,

With his fleet hounds beside him, issu'd forth

Telemachus, to join th' assembled Greeks

In council ; with majestic gait he mov'd,

And Euryclea, daughter wise of Ops,

Pisenor's son, the women thus enjoin'd :

Haste—stand not idle—sweep the palace-floor

And sprinkle it ; then give the sumptuous seats

Their purple coverings. Let others cleanse

With sponges all the tables, wash and rinse

The beakers well, and the resplendent cups ;

Run others to the fountain, and bring thence

Water with speed ; for all the suitor-train

In haste to celebrate this joyous day,
Apollo's festival, will soon arrive*.

She spake, whom all, obedient, heard; forth went
Together twenty to the crystal fount,
While others well their tasks perform'd at home.
Then came the serving-men and split the wood†;
The women next with water from the fount,
Whom soon the swineherd follow'd, driving three
Selected brawns, which in the spacious court
He feeding left, and, with a friendly voice
Addressing him, Ulysses thus bespake:

Guest! look the Grecians on thee with respect
At length, or still disdainful as before?

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd:
Yes—and I would that vengeance from the Gods
Might pay their insolence, who thus usurp
Dominion here, and, in another's house,
With no respect of right, or dread of shame,
Much evil daily work, and purpose more.

Thus they conferr'd; and now Melantheus came
The goatherd, driving, with the needless aid
Of those two swains, the fattest of his goats,

* The new moon.—B. & C.

† Instead of *μνηστῆρες* Dr. Bentley in two MSS. found *δρηστῆρες*, which seems the better reading, the task of cleaving wood being work fitter for the servants than the suitors. They in fact enter afterward, see l. 292.—C.

To feast the suitors. In the sounding porch
The goats he tied, then, drawing near, in terms
Reproachful thus assail'd Ulysses' ear:

How, stranger? persever'st thou, begging, still
To vex the suitors? wilt thou not depart
Till blows shall separate us, and thou taste,
For thy regale to day, this fist of mine?
Thou art unreasonable thus to beg
Here always—have the Greeks no feasts beside?

He spake, to whom Ulysses answer none
Return'd, but shook his brows, and, silent, fram'd
Terrible purposes. Then third approach'd
A master-swain, Philœtius; fatted goats
He for the suitors brought, with which he drove
A heifer; from the continent they came,
Thence in the public ferry wafted o'er.
He tied them in the sounding porch, then stood
Beside the swineherd, whom he thus bespake:

What foreign guest, Eumæus! hath arriv'd
Of late amongst us? Is his country known?
His lineage and degree? not such by birth
I judge him as he seems, but rather far
Some hapless prince. The Gods indeed delight
To plunge the wand'ers of the world in wo,
When thus they destine even kings to mourn.

He ceas'd; and with his right hand, drawing nigh,

Welcom'd Ulysses, whom he thus bespake :

Hail, hoary guest ! hereafter mayst thou share
Delights not fewer than thy present pains !
O Jove, of all the Gods Thou most severe !
Kings reign by Thee ; yet though by Thee they reign,
Thou spar'st not even kings, whom oft we see
Plung'd by thyself in gulfs of deepest wo.
Soon as I saw thee, Sir ! tears dimm'd my sight,
And sweat bedew'd my forehead, at the thought
Of dear Ulysses ; for if yet he live
And see the sun, such tatters, I suppose,
He wears, a wand'rer among humankind.
But if already with the dead he dwell
In Pluto's drear abode, oh then, alas
For kind Ulysses ! who consign'd to me,
While yet a boy, his Cephalenian herds,
Now multiplied to such a countless store,
As only care like mine could have produc'd.
These, by command of others, I transport
For their regale, who neither heed his son,
Nor fear the righteous vengeance of the Gods,
But long have wish'd impatient to divide
And share the substance of our absent lord.
Me, therefore, this thought occupies, and haunts
My mind not seldom ; while his heir survives,
It were no small offence to drive his herds

Afar, and migrate to a foreign land;
Yet here to dwell, afflicted and oppress'd,
Their slave for whom I rear them, seems to me
Still less supportable ; and I had fled,
And I had serv'd some other mighty chief
Long since (for patience fails me to sustain
My present lot), but that I cherish still
Some hope of my long-banish'd lord's return,
To rid his palace of these lawless guests.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
Herdsman ! since neither void of sense thou seem'st
Nor yet dishonest, but myself am sure,
That thou art owner of a mind discreet,
Hear now my solemn oath. I first adjure
Jove and this hospitable board, and next
The Lares * of the noble chief, whose hearth
Protects me now, that, ere thy going hence,
Ulysses surely shall have reach'd his home,
And thou shalt see him, if thou wilt, thyself,
Slaying these tyrant troublers of his house.

Him answer'd then Philœtius. Jove perform,
As thou hast said ! and quickly shalt thou see
This arm, how prompt and strenuous in his aid.

Eumæus also ev'ry pow'r of Heav'n

* Household Gods who presided over the hearth.

Entreated, that Ulysses might possess
His home again. Thus mutual they conferr'd.

Mean-time the suitors secretly prepar'd
Death for Telemachus ; but while they sat
Consulting, unpropitious, on the left
An eagle soar'd, which grasp'd a tim'rous dove.
Then thus Amphinomus the rest bespake :

My friends ! these consultations, how to slay
Telemachus, will never smoothly run
To their effect ; but let us to the feast.

So spake Amphinomus, whose counsel pleas'd.
Then all into the royal house repair'd,
And, on the thrones and couches throwing off
Their mantles, slew the fatted goats, the sheep,
The swine, and heifer from the distant herd.
The roasted entrails first they shar'd, then fill'd
The beakers, and the swineherd plac'd the cups ;
Philœtius, chief intendant of the beeves,
Serv'd all with bread in platted baskets neat,
While all their cups Melantheus charg'd with wine,
And they assail'd at once the ready feast.
Mean-time Telemachus, with honest guile,
Within the spacious hall, but close beside
The threshold plac'd his father, for whose use
A sordid seat he found and scanty board.
A portion of intestines next he set

Before him, fill'd a golden goblet high,
And thus, in presence of them all, began :

There seated now, drink as the suitors drink.
I will, myself, their biting taunts forbid,
And violence. This edifice is mine,
Not public property ; my father first
Possess'd it, and my right from him descends.
Suitors ! control your tempers and your tongues,
Nor with your hands offend, lest strife ensue.

He ceas'd ; they gnawing, sat, their lips, aghast
With wonder, that Telemachus in his speech
Such boldness us'd. Then spake Eupithes' son,
Antinoüs, and the assembly thus address'd :

Let pass, my friends ! these menaces, though rude,
And scarcely to be borne ; the will of Jove
Concurr'd not, else our orator's harangues,
Now rapid in their course, had ceas'd to flow.

So spake Antinoüs, whom Ulysses' son
Heard unconcern'd. And now the heralds came
In solemn pomp, conducting through the streets
A hecatomb, and in the dusky grove
Of Phœbus, glorious archer of the skies,
The Grecians met*. Mean-time the sav'ry roast

* This is a public procession, and a general assembly of the people of Ithaca. They celebrate the festival in the grove of Apollo ; but the suitors themselves feast as usual in the house of Ulysses, and their banquet in particular is intended in what follows.—C.

Finish'd, and from the spits withdrawn, the guests
Shar'd equally the feast, and, as they serv'd
The suitors, in like sort th' attendants serv'd
Ulysses also; for the hero's son
Himself, Telemachus, had so enjoin'd.
But Pallas (that they might exasp'rate more
Ulysses) suffer'd not the suitor chiefs,
To banquet guiltless of heart piercing scoffs
And violence. There was a suitor nam'd
Ctesippus, born in Samos; coarse he was
And insolent, and, in his father's wealth
Confiding, had presum'd to woo the wife
Of long-exil'd Ulysses. From his seat
That man the haughty suitors thus address'd:

Ye noble suitors, I would speak; attend!
The guest is serv'd; he hath already shar'd
Equal with us; nor less demand the laws
Of hospitality; for neither just
It were nor decent, that a guest, receiv'd
Here by Telemachus, should be denied
His portion of the feast. But now myself
Will give him wherewithal he may requite
The woman his attendant when he bath'd,
Or whatsoever menial else he will.

So saying, he from a basket near at hand
Heav'd an ox-foot, and with a vig'rous arm

Hurl'd it. Ulysses gently bow'd his head,
Shunning the blow, but gratified his just
Resentment with a broad sardonic smile
Of dread significance*. He smote the wall.
Then thus Telemachus rebuk'd the deed:

Ctesippus, thou art fortunate; the bone
Struck not the stranger, for he shunn'd the blow;
Else, had I surely driv'n my glitt'ring lance
Right through thee; then had no connubial rites
Of thine in Ithaca thy sire employ'd,
But thy funereal. No man therefore treat
Me with indignity within these walls;
For though of late all-heedless and a child,
I now can well distinguish good from ill.
We have endur'd much wrong, our flocks devour'd,
Our corn and wine consum'd; for what could I,

* The scholiast informs us, that the Sardians had a barbarous law among them, according to which, on the three days which they set apart for the worship of Saturn, they not only sacrificed the most beautiful of their captives, but of their elders also, all whose age exceeded seventy years. If these victims wept, when they were led to the altar, their tears were deemed dishonourable, and a proof of meanness; but if they cheerfully embraced the by-standers and laughed, they were much applauded. Hence, he says, the laughter of a man in circumstances of misery came to be called Sardonic laughter.—B. & C.

But Pausanias derives the expression from a poisonous herb, which, he says, grew in Sardis, of which whoever ate died laughing.—C.

Single, against your numbers? be content
Now, therefore, and abstain from future harm
And outrage done to me; but if alone
My death can satisfy you, death itself
I would account more eligible far,
Than thus to witness your atrocious deeds
Day after day; to see my guests abus'd,
With blows insulted, and the women dragg'd
With lewd and forceful licence, to the shame
And foul dishonour of my noble home.

He said, and all sat silent, till at length
Thus Agelaüs spake, Diastor's son:

My friends! let none with contradiction thwart,
And rude reply, words rational and just;
Assault no more the stranger, and let all
The women of renown'd Ulysses dwell
In quiet here. My counsel to the queen,
And to Telemachus, shall gentle be,
May it but please them. Long as hope surviv'd
Within your bosoms of the safe return
Of wise Ulysses to his native isle,
So long good reason was, that she should hold,
While yet she might, our wooing in suspense;
For had Ulysses come, that course had prov'd
Wisest and best; but that he comes no more,
Appears now manifest. Thou, therefore, prince!

Seeking thy mother, counsel her to wed
That suitor who shall yield her amplest dow'r,
That thou, for thy peculiar, mayst enjoy
Thy own inheritance in peace and ease,
And she, departing, find another home.

To whom Telemachus, discreet, replied :
I swear by Jove, and by my father's woes,
Who either hath deceas'd afar from home,
Or roams we know not where, that hindrance none
Retards my mother's nuptials fram'd by me ;
Choose whom she may, my farewell gifts shall speak
Me well content, so bounteous shall they be.
But to dismiss her rudely were an act
Unfilial—That I dare not—God forbid !

So spake Telemachus. Then Pallas struck
The suitors with delirium ; wide they stretch'd
Their jaws with unspontaneous laughter loud ;
Their meat dripp'd blood ; tears fill'd their eyes, and dire
Presages of approaching wo, their hearts.
Then godlike Theoclymenus exclaim'd* :

Ah miserable men ! what curse is this,
That takes you now ? night wraps itself around
Your faces, bodies, limbs ; the palace shakes
With peals of groans—and oh, what floods ye weep !

* Who had sought refuge in the ship of Telemachus, when he left Sparta, and came with him to Ithaca.

I see the walls and arches dappled thick
 With gore; the vestibule is throng'd, the court
 On all sides throng'd with apparitions grim
 Of slaughter'd men deep sinking in the gloom
 Of Erebus; the sun is blotted out
 From Heav'n, and midnight whelms you premature*.

He said; they, hearing, laugh'd; and thus the son
 Of Polybus, Eurymachus, replied:

This wand'rer from a distant shore hath left
 His wits behind. Hoa there! conduct him hence
 Into the forum; since he dreams it night
 Already, teach him there that it is day†.

Then answer thus the godlike seer return'd:
 No need, Eurymachus! of guides have I
 To lead me hence; for I have eyes and ears,
 Two feet uncrippled, and a mind exempt

* Seest thou not the suitors assembled for the enjoyment of youthful pleasures, regaling themselves with fatted goats, filled with the tender flesh of kids, listening to the sound of the flute, charging their goblets to the brim, sporting with the discus, sending the javelin to the mark—Who would not affirm that, thus entertained, they are happy? But the prophet and the instructor of others gives them a hint of the future.—

Ah miserable men! what curse is this, &c.

Maxim. Tyr. Dissertat. XXXI.—C.

† This answer of Eurymachus will seem unnatural to the last degree, unless the reader understand, that the prodigies enumerated by Theoclymenus are seen by himself only.

From sickly dotage and delusions wild.
These shall conduct me forth, for well I know
Your doom at hand, a doom which, trust me, none
Shall scape of all the suitors, whose delight
Is mischief, and t' insult what guest soe'er
Ulysses' hospitable doors receive.

He said, and, issuing from the palace, sought
Piræus'* house; he welcom'd his return.
Then all the suitors on each other cast
A look significant, and, to provoke
Telemachus, with gibes his guest pursu'd,
And insolently thus a youth remark'd :

Telemachus ! thy guests, of all who roam,
Are sure the vilest. Witness this forlorn
And hungry wretch, who never drinks or eats
Save what he begs, and whose unmanly breast
No courage warms ;—a cumb'rer of the ground.
Next comes another, subject, as it seems,
To sudden fits of prophecy. But hear,
For I will teach thee, wilt thou but be taught.
E'en let us bind them, and, transporting both
To Lemnos, sell them at what price we may.

So spake the suitor, whom Ulysses' son
Heard unconcern'd, and, silent, look'd and look'd

* To whom Telemachus had consigned the care of him on his first arrival.—B. & C.

Toward his father, vigilant to seize
The sign for slaughter of his shameless foes.
Penelope, mean-time, the chaste, the wise,
Icarius' daughter from a splendid seat
Plac'd opposite within her own recess
Heard all their mock'ries*. They, with noisy mirth,
Feasted deliciously, for they had slain
Many a fat victim ; but a sadder feast,
Than soon the Goddess and the warrior chief
For them should furnish, none shall ever share,
Of which their crimes had furnish'd first the cause.

* The women's apartment and that of the men were on opposite sides of the house.—B. & C.

ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST BOOK.

Penelope proposes to the suitors a contest with the bow, herself the prize. They prove unable to bend the bow ; when Ulysses, having with some difficulty possessed himself of it, manages it with the utmost ease, and dispatches his arrow through twelve rings erected for the trial.

BOOK XXI.

NOW came the dreadful hour, when Pallas urg'd
Icarius' lovely daughter, the discreet
Penelope, with bow and rings to prove
Her suitors in Ulysses' courts, a strife
Most fatal in conclusion to them all.
First, taking in her hand the brazen key
Well-forg'd, and fitted with an iv'ry grasp;
Attended by the women of her train

She sought her inmost chamber, the recess
 In which his brass, his gold, and temper'd steel
 Ulysses kept. There hung his stubborn bow,
 And there his ample quiver fill'd with shafts,
 A deadly store, which Iphitus, the son
 Of Eurytus, in Lacedæmon gave
 Ulysses on a time, when, as it chanc'd
 He met him in Messenia*, in the house
 Of brave Orsilochus. Ulysses came
 Demanding payment of arrearage due
 From all that land ; for a Messenian fleet
 Had borne from Ithaca three hundred sheep,
 With all their shepherds ; long the voyage was ;
 Yet thither, even in his boyish days
 Sent by Laertes and the senate forth,
 To make the just demand, Ulysses went.
 But Iphitus had thither come to seek
 Twelve mares and twelve mule colts, which he had lost,
 A search that cost him soon a bloody death.
 For in the house of Hercules, the bold
 And indefatigable son of Jove,
 Victim of lawless violence, he died.
 The ruthless hero plac'd him at his board,
 Then, negligent alike of wrath divine
 And the host's duty, kill'd him ; for he kept,

* A province of Laconia.—B. & C.

Himself, the mules which Iphitus had lost.
 Them seeking in Messenia, there he met
 Ulysses, and on him that bow conferr'd,
 Which erst huge Eurytus had borne, and which
 Dying he left for Iphitus to bear.
 Ulysses, in return, on him bestow'd
 A spear and sword, ill-fated pledges both
 Of hospitality ; for ere they saw
 Each other more, the son of Jove his guest
 The godlike Iphitus profanely slew*.
 Thus came the bow into Ulysses' hands,
 Which never in his gallant barks he bore

* The scholiast relates the story thus—Iphitus, the son of Eurytus, an Æchalian by birth, having lost his mares, sought them in all the cities round about ; but Polyides the prophet admonishing him not to seek them in Tiryntha, for that he would do it to his hurt, he despised the caution, and sought them there also ; when Hercules dragging him to the battlements of his city, cast him down headlong, having a quarrel with him and his father, who, on his return from Hell, where he had bound Cerberus, refused him his promised bride *Lola*, and dismissed him scornfully.—B. & C.

But according to Spondanus, whose opinion Clarke approves, the more probable reason, for which he slew Iphitus, was, lest he should discover the stolen mares. It seems at least to be the reason assigned by Homer, who says

ἔπειτα δὲ πέφνε καὶ αὐτόν·

Ἰππίης δ' αὐτὸς ἔχε κρατερώνυχας ἐν μεγάροισιν.—C.

Not that Hercules stole them himself, for they were stolen by Autolycus, as Eustathius informs us, from whom Hercules bought them ; conscious however that they were stolen.

To battle (though he bent it oft at home)
But kept it in his palace safely stor'd,
A much-esteem'd memorial of his friend.

Soon as, divinest of her sex, arriv'd
At that same chamber, with her foot she press'd
Its oaken threshold, levell'd by the line
And shaven smooth, with shapely columns tall
At either end, on which the portals hung,
She loos'd the ring and brace, then introduc'd
The key, and aiming at them from without,
Struck back the bolts*. The portals, at that stroke,
Sent forth a tone deep as the pastur'd bull's,
And flew wide open. Mounting next the broad
And elevated floor, on which the chests,
That held her own sweet-scented raiment stood,
With lifted hand she lower'd from its hold
The bow within its glitt'ring case secur'd.
Then, sitting there, she laid it on her knees,
Weeping aloud, and drew it from the case.
Thus weeping over it long time she sat,
Till satiate, at the last, with grief and tears,
Descending by the palace steps she sought
Again the suitors, bearing in her hand

* The reader will of course observe, that the whole of this process implies a sort of mechanism, very different from that with which we are acquainted.—The translation, I believe, is exact.

The bow now loosen'd, and the quiver, fill'd
With pointed arrows bright, a deadly store.
Behind her also, laden with a chest,
In which Ulysses had the rings enclos'd
In contest us'd, some brazen, some of steel,
Her damsels went; and when at length she came,
Loveliest of women, where the suitors sat,
Between the pillars of the stately dome
Pausing, before her beauteous face she spread
Her slender veil, and, with a female guard
On either side, th' assembly thus address'd:

Ye bold intruders here, who never meet,
But to devour the substance of a chief
Long absent from his home, nor can invent
Pretext or palliative for such abuse,
Save your desire to make a bride of me,
Attend this game, to which I call you forth.
Behold this pond'rous bow; my godlike spouse
Hath bent it oft; the suitor, who shall bend
This bow with ease, and who shall speed a shaft
Through these twelve rings, him following, I forsake
This mansion of my youth, so fair, so fill'd
With all abundance, and which, doubtless, oft
I shall remember even in my dreams.

So saying, she bade Eumæus lay the bow
Before them, and the twice six rings of steel.

He wept, receiv'd them, and obey'd ; nor wept
Philæti^{us} less, seeing the bow, which erst
His lord had occupied ; when, at their tears
Indignant, thus Antinoüs exclaim'd :

Ye rural drones, whose purblind eyes see not
Beyond the present hour, egregious fools !
Why, weeping, trouble ye the queen, distress'd
Too much already for her husband lost ?
Rest on your seats, and silent share the feast ;
Or, going forth to weep, leave us t' assay
This arduous task severe ; for none, I judge,
Shall bend this bow with ease, since, of us all,
None owns Ulysses' force, whom having seen,
While yet a child, I well remember still.

He said, but in his heart indulg'd, the while,
Fond hope, that he should bend, himself, the bow,
And pass the rings, though foremost of them all
Ordain'd to perish by the mortal taste
Of brave Ulysses' shaft, whom erst he dar'd
Himself to slight and teach the rest to scorn.
Amidst them then the sacred might arose
Of young Telemachus, who thus began :

Me, surely, Jove hath suddenly depriv'd
Of all sound intellect. My mother, wise
And prudent, and with cause most dear to me,

Proclaims her purpose, to forsake her home,
Espousing whom she must, and I, the while,
Trifle and laugh as I were still a child.
But come, ye suitors ! since the prize is such,
A princess, like to whom can none be found
This day in all Achaia ; on the shores
Of sacred Pylus, or within the walls
Of Argos, or Mycenæ, or our own,
Or in Epirus ; and since this yourselves
Know likewise, praise of mine she little needs.
Delay not, therefore, waste not time in vain
Excuses, turn not from the proof, but bend
At once the bow, for quick decision's sake.
I will, myself, make trial, and should I
Prevail to bend it, and to pass the rings,
Then shall I not with anguish see the queen
Following another, and forsaking me,
Whom now my years, my stature, and my strength,
Prompt forth to games, in which my sire excell'd.

He said, and starting from his seat, cast off
His purple cloak, and laid his sword aside,
Then fix'd, himself, the rings, a furrow first
Op'ning, of length that might suffice for all,
And scoop'd by line, then stamping close the glebe.
All wonder'd, with such skill the spikes he plac'd,

A task which never had he seen perform'd*.
Then, hasting to the portal, there he stood.
Thrice, with full force he strove to bend the bow,
And thrice he paus'd, but still with hope to draw
The bow-string home, and pass his arrow through†.
And now the fourth time straining tight the cord,
He should have hitch'd it, but his father's looks
Repress'd his eager efforts, and he ceas'd.
Then thus the royal youth again exclaim'd:

Gods ! either I shall prove of little force
Hereafter, and for manly feats unapt,
Or I am yet too young, and have not strength
To quell th' aggressor's contumely. But come—
(For ye have strength surpassing mine) try ye
The bow, and bring this contest to an end.

He ceas'd, and on the floor set down the bow,
Reclining it against the pannell'd boards,
That lin'd the wall; the light shaft next he plac'd
Beside it, leaning on the polish'd horn,

* Because, at the time when Ulysses used this pastime, Telemachus was either not born, or merely an infant, since such his father left him when he went to Troy.—C.

† This first attempt of Telemachus and the suitors was not an attempt to shoot, but to lodge the bow-string on the opposite horn, the bow having been released at one end, and slackened while it was laid by.

And to the seat, whence he had ris'n, return'd.

Then thus Eupithes' son, Antinoüs spake :

From right to left, my friends ! as wine is giv'n,
Come forth, and in succession try the bow*.

So spake Antinoüs, and his counsel pleas'd.

Then first Leiodes, CEnop's son, arose.

He was their soothsayer, and ever sat

Beside the beaker, distant from the most,

For he detested mischief, and his heart

Ofttimes with anger burn'd against them all †.

He then took foremost up the shaft and bow,

And, at the portal standing, strove to bend,

But bent it not, fatiguing first his hands,

Too delicate and uninur'd to toil.

He ceas'd, and his companions thus bespake :

My friends, I speed not ; let another try ;

But many a prince's life this fatal bow

Shall shorten, since to die far better seems

Than to survive lost happiness, the prize

* Antinoüs prescribes to them this manner of rising to the trial for the good omen's sake, the left hand being held unpropitious.

† The place where the beaker stood, and consequently the cup-bearer's place, was at the extremity of the room. There it was that Leiodes constantly sat, and he was therefore the proper person to make the first trial, according to the direction of Antinoüs.—C.

See L. 166.

Which here we seek, and here have sought so long.
Some suitor, at this moment, doubtless, hopes,
That he shall wed whom long he hath desir'd,
Ulysses' wife, Penelope ; let him
Essay the bow, and, trial made, address
His spousal offers to so some other fair
Among the long-stol'd princesses of Greece,
This princess leaving his whom she shall deem
Most lib'ral, and whom fate shall favour most.

He ceas'd, and on the floor set down the bow,
Reclining it against the pannell'd boards,
That lin'd the wall ; the light shaft, next, he plac'd,
Beside it, leaning on the polish'd horn,
And to the seat, whence he had ris'n, return'd.
Then him Antinoüs, angry, thus reprov'd :

What word, Leiodes, of unpleasing sound
Hath scap'd thy lips ? it fires me with disdain.
Shall this bow fatal prove to many a prince,
Because thou hast, thyself, too feeble prov'd,
To bend it ? Thou wast neither born to bend
The unpliant bow, nor to direct the shaft,
But here are nobler, who shall soon prevail.

He said, and to Melanthius gave command,
The goatherd : Hence, Melanthius, kindle fire ;
Beside it place, with fleeces spread, a form
Of length commodious ; from within procure

A large round cake of suet next, with which
Chafing and suppling first the rigid bow
Before the fire, we will again essay
To bend it, and decide the doubtful strife.

He ended, and Melanthius, kindling fire,
Beside it plac'd, with fleeces spread, a form
Of length commodious ; next he brought a cake
Ample and round of suet from within,
With which they chaf'd the bow, then tried again
To bend, but bent it not, too feeble far
For that exploit. All strove, save only two,
Antinoüs and Eurymachus ; a pair,
Past competition, ablest of them all*.

Then went the herdsman and the swineherd forth
Together ; after whom the glorious chief
Himself went forth, Ulysses ; and when all
Without the court had met, with gentle speech
Ulysses then the faithful swains address'd :

Herdsman ! and thou, Eumæus ! shall I keep
A certain secret close, or shall I speak
Outright ? I burn t' impart it, and I will.

* They probably reserved themselves for a later trial, that, others having had an opportunity to prove their insufficiency, their own superior force might be evident, if they succeeded. Had they made an earlier attempt, and a successful one, others might have had room to boast, that they could have done the like, had they not been anticipated.

What welcome should Ulysses at your hands
Receive, arriving sudden at his home,
Some God his guide ? would ye the suitors aid,
Or aid Ulysses rather ? answer true.

Then thus the chief intendant of his herds :
Would Jove but grant me my desire, to see
Once more the hero, and would some kind Pow'r
Restore him, I would give thee soon to know
What force I can exert in fight for him.

Eumæus also fervently the Gods
In pray'r implor'd, that they would render back
Ulysses to his home. He then, convinc'd
Of their unfeigning honesty, began :

Behold him ! I am he myself, arriv'd
After long suff'rings in the twentieth year !
I know how welcome to yourselves alone
Of all my train I come, for I have heard
None others praying for my safe return.
I therefore tell you truth ; should Heav'n subdue
The suitors under me, ye shall receive
Each, by my gift, a bride, with lands and house
Near neighb'ring mine, and thenceforth shall be, both,
Dear friends and brothers of the prince my son.
This sign shall also speak, and with a voice,
That must enforce your credence. View the scar,
Which in the thickets of Parnassus erst,

Where with my kinsmen of my mother's house
I rous'd a boar, his iv'ry tusk impress'd.

So saying, he stripp'd his tatters, and unveil'd
The whole broad scar; then, soon as they beheld
That token, conscious of its truth, each cast
His arms around Ulysses, wept, embrac'd,
And press'd him to his bosom, kissing oft
His brows and shoulders, who as oft their hands
And foreheads kiss'd, nor had the setting sun
Beheld them satisfied, but that himself
Ulysses thus admonish'd them, and said:

Cease now from tears, lest any, coming forth,
Mark, and report them to the foe within,
And seek the hall again; but one by one,
Not all at once, I foremost, then yourselves,
And this shall be the sign. Full well I know,
That, all unanimous, they will oppose
Surrender of the bow and shafts to me;
But thou (proceeding with it to my seat),
Eumæus, noble friend! shalt place it safe
Within my grasp; then bid the women close
The massy doors, and should they hear a groan
Or other noise made by the princes shut
Within the hall, let none with curious haste
Step forth abroad, but each her task pursue
With mute attention. Be the palace-door

Thy charge, my good Philœtius ! key it fast
Without a moment's pause, and fix the brace*.

He ended, and, returning, press'd again
His former seat ; nor staid his servants long
Without, but follow'd their illustrious lord.
Eurymachus with busy fingers turn'd
And turn'd the bow, still chafing it before
The sprightly blaze, but, after all, could find
No pow'r to bend it. Disappointment wrung
A groan from his proud heart, and thus he said :

Alas ! not only for myself I grieve,
But grieve for all. Nor, though I mourn the loss
Of such a bride, mourn I that loss alone
(For lovely Grecians may be found no few
In Ithaca, and in the neighbour isles),
But should we fall, at last, so far beneath
The brave Ulysses, that no force of ours
Can bend his bow, what portion then, but shame,
Must we receive from ages yet to come ?

To whom Antinoüs thus, Eupithes' son :
Eurymachus ! not so. Thou know'st the cause ;
The feast of Phœbus ; who would, on the day

* The *δεσμός* seems to have been a strap designed to close the only aperture, by which the bolt could be displaced, and the door opened.—C.

Sacred to Phœbus, dare t' employ the bow *?
Cease ; lay it by ; but let the rings remain
Where now they stand, which no man, ent'ring here,
Will venture to displace, and bid the youth
Serve all with wine ; that, first libation made,
We may religiously lay down the bow.
Command ye too Melanthius, that he drive
Hither the fairest goats of all his flocks
At dawn of day ; that, burning first the thighs
To the ethereal archer, we may make
New trial, and decide at length the strife.

So spake Antinoüs ; and his counsel pleas'd.
The heralds then pour'd water on their hands,
While youths crown'd high the goblets, which they
bore

From right to left, with ceremonial due.
When each had made libation, and had drunk
Till well suffic'd, then, ever shrewd t' improve
Occasion, thus Ulysses interpos'd :

Ye suitors of the matchless queen, attend !
I speak my fervent wish, but shall entreat
Eurymachus and his illustrious friend
Antinoüs most, who counsels now so well.

* The meaning of this pretext seems to be, that archership being in peculiar the attribute of Phœbus, to attempt a proof of theirs on a day devoted to his worship, would be to expose themselves to his jealousy and resentment.

Tamper no longer with the bow, but leave
 The matter with the Gods, who shall decide
 The strife to morrow, fav'ring whom they will.
 Mean-time grant *me* the bow, that I may prove
 My pow'r to bend it ere I yet depart,
 For trial's sake if still these hands retain
 Their wonted force, or whether wand'rings long,
 And loss of all that cherishes and feeds
 The strength of man, have wasted mine away.

He said, whom they with indignation heard
 Extreme, alarm'd lest he should bend the bow,
 And sternly thus Antinoüs replied :

Ill-fated wretch, and senseless as forlorn !
 Art not contented to partake the feast
 With such as we? None robs thee of thy part,
 And thou hast leave to witness, sitting here,
 Our whole discourse ; an honour, save to thee,
 To none allow'd of all the vagrant tribe.
 Wine hath befool'd thee, which makes foolish all
 Wide-throated drinkers, unrestrain'd by rule.
 Wine in the mansion of the mighty chief
 Pirithoüs made the valiant Centaur mad,
 Eurytion, at the Lapithæan feast*.

* When Pirithoüs, one of the Lapithæ, married Hippodamia, daughter of Adrastus, he invited the Centaurs to the wedding. The Centaurs, intoxicated with wine, attempted to ravish the wives of the Lapithæ, who, in resentment of that insult, slew them.—B. & C.

He drank to drunkenness, and, being drunk,
Committed great enormities beneath
Pirithoüs' roof, and such as fill'd with rage
The hero-guests, who therefore by his feet
Dragg'd him right through the vestibule, amerc'd
Of nose and ears, and he departed thence
Frantic for very shame; whence soon ensu'd
Fierce war between the Centaurean race
And humankind; but on himself he pull'd
That evil, his excess in wine the cause.
Great evil also, shouldst thou bend the bow,
I prophesy to thee; for thou shalt find
Protector none or advocate in all
This people, but we will dispatch thee hence
Incontinent on board a sable bark
To ruthless Echetus, that foe from whom
No pris'ner e'er escapes*. Then drink in peace,
And quarrel shun with younger men than thou.

Him answer'd, then, Penelope discreet:
Antinoüs! neither seemly were the deed
Nor just, to maim or harm whatever guest,
Whom here arriv'd Telemachus receives.
Think'st thou, that, should he bend the massy bow,
Strong as himself Ulysses, he would claim

* See above. Book xviii, l. 102.

The winner's prize, Ulysses' wife? That thought
His heart disowns; nor let a fear so vain
One suitor's mind distress of all, who meet
To banquet here, since it dishonours me.

She spake; to whom Eurymachus replied,
Offspring of Polybus: O matchless queen!
Icarius' prudent daughter! none suspects,
That thou wilt wed with him; a mate so mean
Should ill become thee; but we fear the tongues
Of either sex, lest some Achaian say
Hereafter (one inferior far to us),
Not such the suitors are, as was the chief,
Whose widow'd mate they seek. His bow to bend
Surpass'd their utmost pow'r; yet here arriv'd,
We know not whence, a wand'rer, who perform'd
The task with ease, and shot through all the rings.
So will they speak, and so shall we be sham'd.

Then answer thus Penelope return'd:
No fair report, Eurymachus, attends
Their names, or can, who, riotous as ye,
The house dishonour, and consume the wealth
Of such a chief. Why shame ye thus *yourselves*?
The guest is of athletic frame, well form'd,
And large of limb; he boasts him also sprung
From noble ancestry. Come then—consent—
Give him the bow that we may see the proof;

For thus I say, and thus will I perform ;
Sure as he bends it, and, by Phœbus' aid,
Thrids all the rings, a tunic fair and cloak
Shall be his meed from me, a jav'lin keen,
To guard him against men and dogs, a sword
Sharp on both sides, with sandals for his feet,
And I will send him whither most he would.

She spake, but thus, discreet, her son replied :
Mother—the bow is mine ; and, save myself,
None here hath right to give it, or refuse.
No prince in rock-bound Ithaca, no chief
Or potentate in all the fruitful isles
Which neighbour Elis*, if I choose to make
The bow his own, shall negative my choice.
Thou, therefore, seek thy chamber ; there the loom
And spindle ply thyself, and strictly charge
Thy women, that they work ; but leave to men,
To stretch the bowstring, and my father's bow
To me, sole ruler, in his absence, here.

He said ; she, mov'd with wonder at the tone,
With which he spake, her son's advice repos'd
Deep in her heart, and with her female train
Ascending sought her chamber. There she wept
Her lost Ulysses, till Minerva bath'd

* Dulichium, Zacynthus, Samos, &c.—B. & C.

With balmy dews of sleep her weary lids*.
And now the noble swineherd bore the bow
Toward Ulysses; but with one voice all
The suitors, clamorous, reprov'd the deed,
Of whom a youth thus insolent exclaim'd:

Thou clumsy swineherd, whither bear'st the bow,
Delirious wretch? should Phœbus and the Gods
Take part with us, the hounds which thou hast fed
Shall eat thee yonder, in thy lone abode.

So they, whom hearing he replac'd the bow
Where erst it stood, affrighted at the sound
Of such loud menaces; on the other side
Telemachus as loud assail'd his ear:

Friend! forward with the bow; soon, else, repent,
That thou obey'dst the many, driven hence
By this my youthful arm with massy stones,
Back to the field. My strength surpasses thine.
I would that all here present were in force

* The poet, having found himself under a necessity to produce Penelope from the women's apartment into that of the men, when she has once finished her proper business, which was to institute the contest with the bow, knowing that she would be of no use in the sequel, dexterously contrives to get rid of her; intending however principally to make her astonishment as great as possible, when she should learn in the same moment the presence of her husband and the destruction of the suitors, of which she is entirely ignorant while it happens.—Eustath.—C.

As far inferiour to myself as thou,
Soon would I, then, give rude dismissal hence
To some, who now with mischief teem alone.

He ceas'd, whose words the suitors, smiling, heard,
And, for their sake, in part their wrath resign'd
Against the prince ; then through the spacious hall
Eumæus bore the bow, which he consign'd
To his lord's hand, and, summoning abroad
The prudent Euryclea, thus began :

It is the pleasure of Ulysses' son,
Sage Euryclea ! that thou key secure
The doors ; and should ye hear, perchance, a groan
Or other noise made by the princes shut
Within the hall, let none look, curious, forth,
But each in quietness her work pursue*.

So he ; nor useless flew his words away,
But Euryclea key'd, at once, the doors.
Then noiseless sprang Philœtius forth, who clos'd
As quick the portals of the palace-court.
A ship-rope of Ægyptian reed, it chanc'd,
Lay in the vestibule ; with that he brac'd

* This is a misrepresentation of the fact, for he had not received his commission from Telemachus, but from Ulysses ; it is, however, a prudent one, and to Eumæus, who knew not that Euryclea was already apprised of the arrival of her master, must have appeared indispensably necessary.—C.

The doors secure, and ent'ring to the guests
Resum'd his seat, but, watchful, ey'd his lord.
He now with busy look and curious touch
Explor'd the bow, now viewing it remote,
Now near at hand, aware that, haply, worms
Had, in his absence, drill'd the solid horn.
A suitor notic'd him, and thus remark'd :

He hath an eye, methinks, exactly skill'd
In bows, and steals them; or perhaps, at home,
Hath such himself, or feels a strong desire
To make them; mark, with what address the rogue,
Adept in mischief, shifts it to and fro !

To whom another, inscilent, replied :
Such fortune crown his efforts, whatsoe'er
He purpose, as attends his effort made
On this same bow, which he shall never bend.

So they ; but when the wary hero wise
Had made his hand familiar with the bow,
Poising it and examining—at once—
As when in harp and song adept, a bard
Strings a new lyre, extending first the chords,
He knits them to the frame at either end,
With promptest ease ! with such Ulysses strung
His own huge bow, and with his right hand trill'd
The nerve, which in its quick vibration sang
As with a swallow's voice. Then anguish turn'd

The suitors pale, and, in that moment, Jove
 Gave him his rolling thunder for a sign.
 Such most propitious notice from the son
 Of wily Saturn hearing with delight,
 He seiz'd a shaft, which at the table's side
 Lay ready drawn; but in his quiver's womb
 The rest yet slept, though destin'd soon to steep
 Their points in Grecian blood. He lodg'd the reed
 Full on the bowstring, drew the parted head
 Home to his breast, and, aiming as he sat,
 At once dismiss'd it. Through the num'rous rings
 Swift flew the gliding steel, and, issuing, sped
 Beyond them; when his son he thus bespake:

Thou need'st not blush, young prince, to have
 receiv'd

A guest like me; for neither swerv'd my shaft,
 Nor labour'd I long time to draw the bow;
 My strength is unimpair'd, not such as these
 In scorn affirm it. But the waning day
 Calls us to supper, after which succeeds
 Jocund variety, the song, the lyre,
 With all that heightens and adorns the feast*.

* This is an instance of the *Σαρδάνιον μάλα τοῖον* mentioned in Book XX; such as, perhaps, could not be easily paralleled. I question if there be a passage, either in ancient or modern tragedy, so truly terrible as this seeming levity of Ulysses, in the moment when he was going to begin the slaughter.

He said, and gave him, with his brows, the sign :
At once the son of the illustrious chief
Slung his keen falchion, grasp'd his spear, and stood
Arm'd bright for battle at his father's side.

ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTY-SECOND BOOK.

Ulysses, with some little assistance from Telemachus, Eumæus, and Philætiüs, slays all the suitors ; and twelve of the female servants, who had allowed themselves in illicit intercourse with them, are hanged. Melanthius also is punished with miserable mutilation.

BOOK XXII.

THEN, girding up his rags, Ulysses sprang
With bow and full-charg'd quiver to the door;
Loose on the broad stone at his feet he pour'd
His arrows, and the suitors thus bespake* :

* When you rehearse Homer's description of Ulysses springing to the threshold with a leap, discovering himself to the suitors and pouring out his arrows at his feet, have you then possession of yourself, or are you rapt into an ecstasy ? and is your spirit enthusiastically hurried to the spot where the scene is laid, whether in Ithaca or in Troy, or wheresoever the poet pleases ?

Plato in *Ione*,—C.

This prize, though difficult, hath been achiev'd.
Now for another mark, which never man
Struck yet; but I will strike it, if I may,
And if Apollo make that glory mine.

The hero spake, and at Antinoüs aim'd
A bitter shaft; he purposing to drink,
Both hands advanc'd toward a golden cup
Twin-ear'd, nor aught suspected death so nigh*.
For who could, at a public feast, suspect,
That one alone would dare, however bold,
Design his death, and execute the deed?
Yet him Ulysses with an arrow pierc'd
Full in the throat, and through his neck behind
Sprang forth his arrow's point. Aslant he droop'd;
Down fell the goblet, through his nostrils flew
The spouted blood, and, spurning with his foot

* The proverb which says—

“ Many things happen between the cup and the lip,”

is said to have been suggested by this passage. It is certain, that it was Greek before it was English, and ran thus :

Πολλὰ μεταξὺ πέλει κύλικος καὶ χεῖλεος ἄκρον.—B. & C.

Ancæus the Samian ordered his servant to bring him wine. His servant replied, that he would not be able to drink it. He reprov'd his servant, and seizing the cup applied it to his lips. The servant answered by quoting the proverb; when in that moment news arrived, that a wild boar was laying waste his vineyard. Instantly setting down the cup, he ran to seek the boar, which he soon found, and was slain by it.—The story is told by Aristotle.—B.

The board, he spread his viands in the dust.
At once that sight with wild disorder fill'd
The whole assembly ; from the thrones they sprang,
Tumultuous, and from side to side explor'd
The palace-walls, but neither sturdy lance
Nor shield, nor buckler, now, might there be seen*.
Then menacing Ulysses, thus they said :

Stranger ! that arrow's flight was false ; a man
Is no just mark. Thou never shalt contend
For prize hereafter : but shalt surely die,
For thou hast slain an Ithacan, the prime
Of all this isle, and shalt be vultures' food†.

Various their judgements were, but none believ'd,
That he had slain him wittingly, nor saw
Th' infatuate men fate hov'ring o'er them all.
Then thus Ulysses, low'ring dark, replied :

O dogs ! not fearing aught my safe return
From Ilium, ye have shorn my substance close,
Have forc'd my women, and have woo'd my wife,
Myself still living, heedless of the Gods
Alike, and of the just revenge of man,

* For Ulysses and Telemachus had removed them all, as the reader has already seen in the nineteenth book, at the beginning.

† The original speech consisting chiefly of short sentences, is on that account noticed by Eustathius, as peculiarly proper to a person speaking in great anger.—C.

Now therefore die, now perish all as he.

He said; their cheeks all faded at the sound,
And each with sharpen'd eyes, search'd ev'ry nook
For an escape from his impending doom,
Till thus, alone, Eurymachus replied :

If thou indeed art he, the mighty chief
Of Ithaca return'd, thou hast rehears'd
With truth the crimes committed by the Greeks
Full oft, both in thy house and in thy field.
But he, the cause of all, already slain
Lies here, Antinoüs ; he thy palace fill'd
With outrage ; not that he desir'd to wed
Penelope, but rather much t' effect
Far other projects, which Saturnian Jove
Approv'd not ; to possess, himself, the throne
In Ithaca, thy son by treach'ry slain.
But death from thy vindictive hand hath well
Requited him ; now, therefore, cease and spare
Thy people ; public reparation due
Thou shalt receive ; we will appease thy wrath,
For all the waste, that, eating, drinking here,
We have committed, rend'ring each a fine,
Full twenty beeves, with gold and brass besides,
Such store, that joy shall fill thee at the sight,
However just thine anger was before.

To whom Ulysses, frowning stern, replied :

Eurymachus, would ye contribute each
His present treasures, and, in time to come,
His whole inheritance, not, even so,
Should ye redeem the forfeit of your lives,
Till ev'ry suitor suffer for his wrong.
Choose therefore. Fight; or your impending doom
Elude in some dark refuge, if ye may,
But all shall perish, if my thought be true.

He ended; they with trembling knees and hearts
All heard, whom thus Eurymachus address'd:

To your defence, my friends! for respite none
Will he to his victorious hands afford,
But, arm'd with bow and quiver, will dispatch
Shafts from the door till he have slain us all.
Arm, therefore; draw the falchion; from behind
The lifted tables with united force
Assail him; drag him from his covert hold,
The porch; and traversing from side to side
The city, rouse the people with your cries
In ev'ry street; that he may point the shaft
And stretch the twisted bow-string never more.

Thus saying, he drew his brazen falchion keen
Of double edge, and with a dreadful shout
Assail'd him. But Ulysses with a shaft
In that same moment through his bosom driv'n
Transfix'd his liver, and down dropp'd his sword.

Sprinkling the table from his wound, he fell
Convolv'd in agonies, and overturn'd
Both food and wine ; his forehead smote the floor ;
Wo fill'd his heart, and spurning with his heels
His vacant seat, he shook it till he died.
Amphinomus, with his drawn falchion, next,
Advanc'd to drive Ulysses from the door,
And fierce was his assault ; but, from behind,
Telemachus between his shoulders fix'd
A brazen lance, and urg'd it through his breast.
Full on his front, with hideous sound, he fell.
Back started then the prince (the weapon left
Still planted in his spine) lest, had he toil'd
To draw the long spear forth, some foe, perchance,
Should pierce him with a shorten'd blade, or cleave
His temples with a downright edge, the while.
Swift, therefore, to his father's side he ran,
Whom reaching, in wing'd accents thus he said* :

My father ! I will bring thee now a shield,
A helmet, and two spears ; I will enclose

* Courage depends much on the habit of encountering danger. This is the first exploit of Telemachus. It is therefore with singular attention to nature, that the poet represents him wounding his enemy from behind, and starting back again to his father's side, as soon as he has done it.—C.

Myself in armour also, and will give
Both to Philœtius and Eumæus arms
Expedient now, and needful for us all.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied :
Run ; fetch them while I yet have arrows left,
Lest, single, I be justled from the door.

Then to his chamber, whither he had borne
Those arms, ascending, from the secret store
Eight spears, four shields, four crested helms he took,
And, laden as he was, with nimble steps
Impatient sought his father ; at whose side,
Arm'd in bright steel, and with his herdsmen clad
In arms not less resplendent, soon he stood.
Ulysses, while a shaft yet unemploy'd
Lay at his foot, right-aiming, ever pierc'd
Some suitor through, and heaps on heaps they fell.
But when his arrows fail'd the royal chief,
His bow reclining at the portal's side
Against the shining wall, he slung, himself,
A four-fold buckler on his arm, he fix'd
A casque, whose crest wav'd awful o'er his brows
On his illustrious head, and fill'd his gripe
With two stout spears, well headed both with brass.

There was a certain postern in the wall
At the gate's side, the customary pass

Into a narrow street, but barr'd secure*.
 Ulysses bade his faithful swineherd watch
 That egress, station'd near it, for it own'd
 One sole approach ; then Agelaüs loud
 Exhorting all the suitors thus exclaim'd :

O friends ! may none, ascending to the door
 Of yonder postern, give a loud alarm,
 And teach the citizens our sore distress?
 So shall this archer soon have shot his last.

To whom the keeper of the goats replied,
 Melanthius : Agelaüs ! prince renown'd !
 That may not be. The postern and the gate†
 Neighbour too near each other, and th' attempt,
 To force so strait a pass would scarce prevail,
 Since one brave man might thence repulse us all.
 But come—myself will furnish you with arms
 Fetch'd from above ; for there, as I suppose,
 (And not elsewhere) Ulysses and his son

* If the ancients found it difficult, to ascertain clearly the situation of this *ὀπισθόφυρη*, well may we. The translator has given it the position which to him appeared most probable.—There seem to have been two of these posterns, one leading to a part from which the town might be alarmed, the other to the chamber to which Telemachus went for armour. There was one, perhaps, on each side of the portal, and they appear to have been at some height above the floor.

† At which Ulysses stood.

Have hidden them, and there they shall be found.

So spake Melanthius, and, ascending, sought
Ulysses' chambers through the winding stairs
And gall'ries of his house. Twelve shields he took,
Twelve massy spears, twelve crested helmets bright,
And, speedily returning, dealt his charge
Among the suitors*. Trembled then the heart
Of brave Ulysses, and his knees, at sight
Of his opposers putting armour on,
And shaking each his lance. Severe indeed
Now seem'd his task, and in wing'd accents brief
Thus to his son Telemachus he spake :

Either some woman of our train contrives
Hard battle for us, furnishing with arms
The suitors, or Melanthius arms them all.

Him answer'd then Telemachus discreet :
Father, this fault was mine ; me blame for this,
And none besides ; I left the chamber-door

* Hence it was, that the ancients supposed there was another postern, beside that which was guarded by Eumæus ; a postern leading to the chamber in which the arms and armour were deposited.—Eustath.—B. & C.

Aristarchus proscribed this passage as spurious, deeming it impossible, that one man could bring so many ; but M. Dacier and Barnes both justify it, alleging that it is not necessary to suppose he brought them all at once ; accordingly we find him in the sequel coming forth from the chamber with only one shield and one helmet.—B. & C.

Half-clos'd, which, more attentive than myself,
 Their spy perceiv'd. But haste, Eumæus, shut
 The chamber door, observing-well, the while,
 If any women of our train have done
 This deed, or whether, as I more suspect,
 Melanthius, Dolius' son, hath giv'n them arms.

Thus mutual they conferr'd; mean-time again
 Melanthius to the chamber flew in quest
 Of other arms. Eumæus, as he went
 Observ'd him, and Ulysses thus address'd:

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd!
 The traitor whom ourselves suspect is he,
 And seeks again the chamber! Tell me plain,
 Shall I, should I superiour prove in force,
 Slay him, or shall I drag him thence to thee,
 That, dying by thy sword, he may atone
 His num'rous treasons perpetrated here?

Then answer thus Ulysses shrewd return'd:
 Myself will, with Telemachus, detain
 The suitors here, how fierce soe'er they prove.
 Ye two, the while, bind fast Melanthius' hands
 And feet behind his back, then cast him bound
 Into the chamber, and (the door secur'd)
 Pass underneath his arms a twisted cord;
 Then weighing him a pillar's height aloft,
 And till he reach the beams, suspended leave

The wretch to suffer much, and still to live*.

He spake; they prompt obey'd; together both
They sought the chamber; he within, the while,
Their coming heard not, busied in the search
Of ev'ry nook for armour and for arms.
They, standing, watch'd the door, from which, at
length,

Forth came Melanthius, bearing in one hand
A casque, and in the other a broad shield,
Time-worn and chopp'd with drought, which in his
youth

Warlike Laertes had been wont to bear.
Neglected it had lain 'till wasting years
Had loos'd the suture of the loops. At once
Both, springing on him, seiz'd and drew him in
Forcibly by his locks, then cast him down
Prone on the pavement, trembling at his fate.
With painful stricture of the cord his hands
They bound and feet together at his back,
As their illustrious master had enjoin'd,
Then weigh'd him with a stronger cord aloft
By a tall pillar to the palace-roof,

* Barnes here cites a passage from the life of Tiberius by Suetonius—"Those who were willing to die, he yet constrained to live; for he thought death so slight a punishment that, being informed that a certain criminal named Carnulius had anticipated his execution, putting himself to death, he said—*Carnulius has given me the slip.* And on another occasion, when a condemned person implored a speedy death, he replied.—"*We are not yet friends again.*"

And thus, deriding him, Eumæus spake :

Now, good Melanthius, on that fleecy bed
Reclin'd, as well befits thee, thou wilt watch
All night, nor when the golden Dawn forsakes
The streams of ocean will she scape thine eye,
But thou wilt duly to the palace drive
The fattest goats, a banquet for thy friends.

So saying, he left him in his dreadful sling.
Then, arming both, and barring fast the door,
They sought brave Laertiades again.
Undaunted there they stood ; four, at the gate,
Oppos'd to many valiant youths within ;
When Pallas, in the form and with the voice
Of Mentor, to Laertes' son approach'd,
Who saw, and, seeing her, with joy exclaim'd :

O Mentor ! save me. Now befriend thy friend—
(Such, many a year) and playmate, when a child.

So he, not unsuspicious that he saw
Pallas, the heroine of Heav'n. Mean-time
The suitors fill'd with menaces the dome,
And Agelaüs first, Damastor's son,
In accents harsh the Goddess thus rebuk'd :

Beware, O Mentor ! that he lure thee not,
T' oppose the suitors in his desp'rate cause,
For thus will we. The father and his son
Both slain, in vengeance of thy purpos'd deeds

Against us, we will slay *thee* next, and thou
With thy own head shalt satisfy the wrong.
Your force thus quell'd in battle, all thy wealth
In house and field, confounding it with his,
We will confiscate ; we will banish hence
Thy sons and daughters, and thy virtuous spouse
Shall leave this city, never to return.

He ended, and his words with wrath inflam'd
Minerva's heart the more ; incens'd she turn'd
Toward Ulysses, whom she thus reprov'd :

Thou neither own'st the courage nor the force,
Ulysses, now, which, in the field of Troy,
For high-born Helen's sake, thou didst exert
Through nine whole years ; there, multitudes by thee
Fell slain in furious battle, and, at length,
Thy counsels laid the tow'rs of Priam low.
Why, in possession of thy proper home
And substance, mourn'st thou want of pow'r t' oppose
The suitors ? Stand beside me, mark my deeds,
And Mentor son of Alcimus confess
Thy valiant friend, and mindful of thy love.

She spake ; but still designing proof severe
Of each, the father and his glorious son,
Not yet made vict'ry theirs. A swallow's form
Assuming, on a golden beam aloft
She perch'd, and sat spectatress of the fight.

Then Demoptolemus; Polyctor's son,
Pisander; Polybus; the haughty prince
Eurynomus; Amphinomus, and old
Damastor's offspring, Agelaüs, rous'd
The rest to battle, for illustrious most
Of all the suitor train, who now surviv'd,
And fought for life, were these. The bow, with shafts
In quick succession sent, had quell'd the rest,
And Agelaüs thus exhorted all:

We soon shall tame, O friends, this warrior's might,
Whom Mentor, after all his airy vaunts
Hath left, and at the portal now remain
Themselves alone. Dismiss not therefore all
Your spears together, but with six alone
Assail them first; Jove willing, we shall pierce
Ulysses, and subduing him, shall slay
With ease the rest; their force is safely scorn'd.

He ceas'd; and, as he bade, six hurl'd the spear
Together; but Minerva gave them all
A devious flight; one struck a column, one
The planks of the broad portal, and a third
Flung right his ashen beam against the wall*.
Their weapons thus all hurl'd in vain, the brave
Ulysses his companions thus advis'd:

* The deviation of three only is described, which must be understood, therefore, as instances of the ill success of all.

Hear now, my friends ! my counsel. I hurl the spear
At once with indiscriminating aim
Against them all ; since now they seek to crown
Their other crimes with slaughter of ourselves.

He spake, nor they delay'd, but instant hurl'd
Their glitt'ring spears. Ulysses on the ground
Stretch'd Demoptolemus ; Ulysses' son,
Euryades ; Eumæus, at his side
Elätus, and the keeper of the beeves
Pisander ; in one moment all alike
Lay grinding with their teeth the dusty floor.
Back flew the suitors to the farthest wall,
On whom those valiant four advancing, each
Recover'd, quick, his weapon from the dead,
Then hurl'd the desp'rate suitors yet again
Their glitt'ring spears, but Pallas gave to each
A frustrate course ; one struck a column, one
The planks of the broad portal, and a third
Flung full his ashen beam against the wall.
Yet pierc'd Amphimedon the prince's wrist,
But with a surface-wound, and o'er his shield
Ctesippus with his spear the shoulder reach'd
Of good Eumæus ; but the weapon glanc'd,
O'erflew the mark, and fell. And now the four,
Ulysses, dauntless hero, and his friends
All hurl'd their spears together in return.

Ulysses, leveller of lofty tow'rs,
 Transpierc'd Eurydamas; Ulysses' son,
 Amphimedon; the swineherd, Polybus;
 And through his breast the keeper of the beeves
 Ctesippus, glorying over whom, he cried:

O son of Polytherses! skill'd in arts
 Of mock'ry and derision, never more
 Boast foolishly, but to the Gods commit
 Thy tongue, since they are mightier far than thou,
 Take this—a gift to recompense thy gift
 And pledge of future amity, the hoof,
 Which while he roam'd the palace, begging alms,
 Ulysses at thy bounteous hand receiv'd*.

So spake Philœtius. Then, spear in hand,
 Ulysses pierc'd Damastor's son, and next
 Telemachus his lance's glitt'ring head
 Drove through the bowels of Evenor's son,
 Leiocritus; he prostrate smote the floor.
 Then Pallas from the lofty roof held forth
 Her host-confounding Ægis o'er their heads,
 With'ring their souls with fear. They scatter'd fled
 As heifers flee, which, borne on nimble wing,
 The gadfly dissipates, infester fell

* Τῆρό σοι ἀντὶ ποδὸς ξεινήιον—in process of time became proverbial, and was applied to the case of those who suffered retaliation.—C.

Of grazing herds, when vernal heats prevail*.
 But these, as falcons from the mountains stoop,
 Arm'd with strong talons and with crooked beaks,
 On smaller fowls affrighted by the toils ;
 At once they strike the quarry ; force alike
 And refuge fail them ; smitten to the ground
 In heaps they fall, the fowlers seize the prey—
 So these, pursuing through the spacious hall
 The suitors, smote them on all sides ; their heads
 Sounded beneath the sword ; with hideous groans
 The palace rang ; the pavement foam'd with blood.
 Then flew Leiodes to Ulysses' knees,
 Which clasping, in wing'd accents thus he cried :
 I clasp thy knees, Ulysses ! oh respect

* The *œstrum* or gadfly, according to the scholiast, is bred from an animalcule, with which water abounds, for which reason it is chiefly found in marshy places.—C. It has the hue of brass, and, when it enters the ears of cattle, makes them furious.—B. & C.

It is thus mentioned by Virgil, *Geo.* III. 146.

*Est lucos Silari circa, ilicibusque virentem
 Plurimus Alburnum volitans, cui nomen asilo
 Romanum est, oestron Graii vertère vocantes,
 Asper, acerba sonans ; quo tota exterrita sylvis
 Diffugiunt armenta*—————C.

Around the groves of Silarus, and where
 Alburnus rears his oaks, a winged pest,
 By us *asilus* nam'd, but by the Greeks
Oestros, abounds ; malignant and that hums
 A hateful note, which hearing, on all sides
 The cattle fly, and frighted roam the woods.

My suit, and spare me ! Never have I sinn'd
Against thy women or in word or deed,
But others sinning in that sort have oft
Forbidden, who, persisting in despight
Of my reproof, have reach'd a shameful end.
But my sole crime hath been, that as a seer
I serv'd the suitors ; an offence, for which
Ordaining me to die, thou shalt but prove,
That pious men and just are such in vain.

To whom Ulysses with a frown replied :
Is that thy sole offence, that thou hast serv'd
The suitors as a seer ? Their seer, methinks,
Must oft have pray'd, that I might never taste
Domestic sweets again, and with a zeal
Peculiar, that my consort, made his own,
Might bear him children. Refuge, therefore, none
For thee remains, but thou shalt also die.

So saying, he caught the falchion from the floor
Which Agelaüs had let fall, and smote
Leiodes, while he kneel'd, athwart his neck
So suddenly, that ere his tongue had ceas'd
To plead for life, his head was in the dust.
But Phemius, son of Terpius, bard divine,
Who, through compulsion, with his song regal'd
The suitors, a like dreadful death escap'd.
Fast by the postern, harp in hand, he stood,

Doubtful if, issuing, he should take his seat
Beside the altar of Hercæan Jove*,
Where oft Ulysses offer'd, and his sire,
Fat thighs of beeves, or whether he should haste,
T' embrace his knees, a suppliant for his life.
That course, at length, most pleas'd him; then between
The beaker and an argent-studded throne
He grounded his sweet lyre, and seizing fast
The hero's knees, him, suppliant, thus address'd:

I clasp thy knees, Ulysses! oh respect
My suit, and spare me. Thou shalt not escape
Regret thyself hereafter, if thou slay
Me, charmer of the woes of Gods and men.
Self-taught am I, and treasure in my mind
Songs of all argument from Heav'n inspir'd,
And thou hast heard me chanting to the lyre
Thy glorious deeds, as I had prais'd a God.
Spare, then, this ancient head; since not by choice
(As thy dear son will tell thee), nor to share
The banquet, have I serv'd as minstrel here,
But aw'd by numbers, and by force constrain'd.

So he; whom hearing as he stood beside
His sire, Telemachus thus interpos'd:

Hold—Harm not with the vengeful falchion's edge

* So called because he was worshipped within the *ἔρκος* or wall that surrounded the court.—C.

This blameless man ; and we will also spare
Medon the herald, who hath ever been
A watchful guardian of my boyish years.
Unless Philœtius or Eumæus him
Have mingled with the rest, or thou, perchance,
Unconscious, in the tumult of the fight.

He spake ; whom Medon hearing (for he lay
Beneath a throne, and in a new stripp'd hide
Enfolded, trembling with the dread of death)
Sprang from his covert, cast away the skin,
And, flying to Telemachus, whose knees
He close embrac'd, thus eager su'd to live :

Prince ! I am here—oh, pity me ! repress
Thine own, and pacify thy father's wrath.
That he destroy not me, through fierce revenge
Of their iniquities, who have consum'd
His wealth, and, in their folly, scorn'd his son.

To whom, Ulysses, ever-wise, replied,
Smiling complacent : Fear thou not ; my son
Hath pleaded for thee. Therefore (taught thyself
That truth) teach others the superiour worth
Of honest with dishonest deeds compar'd.
But go ye forth, thou and the sacred bard,
That ye may sit withdrawn in yonder court
From all this carnage, while I give command,
Myself, concerning it, to those within.

He ceas'd; they, going forth, took each his seat
Beside Jove's altar, but with heedful looks
Suspicious, dreading without cease the sword.
Mean-time Ulysses search'd his hall, in quest
Of living foes, if any still surviv'd
Unpunish'd; but he found them all alike
Welt'ring in dust and blood; num'rous they lay
Like fishes when they strew the sinuous shore
Of Ocean, from the gray gulf drawn aground
In nets of many a mesh; athirst to suck
The briny wave they strew the sands, till hot
The gazing sun dries all their life away;
So lay the suitors heap'd, and thus at length
The prudent chief gave order to his son*:
Telemachus! bid Euryclea come

* Observe, says Eustathius, how the poet, as if the achievement were not of itself sufficiently magnificent, magnifies it still more with similes. Having lately employed the comparison of cattle dispersed by the gadfly, and again the other of the vultures seizing small birds, here he introduces a third of fishes strewed on the seabeach. In the sequel he will compare Ulysses to a lion, and the women executed to a flock of doves or thrushes ensnared in a fowling-net. And thus it is—Similes, in general, are thinly sown in the Odyssey, though in the Iliad they abound; because, there, the grandeur of the incidents made illustration necessary.—C.

A fair inference lies from this remark, that, if embellishments abound not in this poem to the same degree as in the Iliad, it is not because the poet's fancy failed him through age, as Longinus uncandidly supposes, but because his judgement directed him to make

Quickly, the nurse, to whom I would impart
Such order as now seems expedient most.

He said; obedient to his sire, the prince
Smote on the door, and summon'd loud the nurse:

Guardian of all our women, ancient dame!
Come forth—my father calls thee; learn his will.

So he; nor useless flew his words away;
For, throwing wide the portal, forth she came,
And, by Telemachus conducted, found
Erelong Ulysses amid all the slain,
With blood defil'd and dust, nor dreadful less
In aspect than the lion, when he leaves
An ox well-nigh devour'd; his cheeks distain'd
And all his ample chest, from side to side,
With gore, bespeak him newly from the prey,
Tremendous spectacle! such seem'd the chief,
Blood-stain'd all over. She, the carnage spread
On all sides seeing, and the pools of blood,
Scarce less than shouted, such a work she saw
Past all her hopes achiev'd, but he repress'd
The struggling rapture, ere it burst abroad,
And in wing'd accents thus his will enforc'd:

Silent exult, O ancient matron dear!

the difference. Dacier accordingly affirms, that, had he composed the *Odyssey* first and the *Iliad* last, we should have found them such as they are, the former simple as it is, and the latter equally rich in ornament.

Shout not, be still. Unholy is the voice
Of loud thanksgiving over slaughter'd men.
These, self-subdu'd by guilt and by the Gods,
Have perish'd thus ; for whether noble guest
Arriv'd or base, they scoff'd at all alike,
And for their wickedness have, therefore, died.
But these my women—teach me to discern
And judge between the guiltless and the rest*.

To whom good Euryclea thus replied:
My son! I will declare the truth ; thou keep'st
Female domestics fifty in thy house,
Whom we have made intelligent to comb
The fleece, and to perform whatever task.
Of these, twice six have overpass'd the bounds
Of modesty, respecting neither me,
Nor yet the queen, who would not that thy son,
Adult so lately, should assume the charge,
To regulate the women of her train†.

* In the nineteenth book, see l. 607, when Euryclea made a voluntary offer of such information, Ulysses refuses to hear it, because at that time it was not wanted ; but now it is become necessary ; for which reason he now demands what he declined before.—C.

† Eustathius understands this as an apology made for Telemachus, lest his father should blame him for having neglected to keep his domestic women within the bounds of duty ; but Clarke more justly interprets the passage, supposing Euryclea to mean nothing more than merely to ascribe the lewdness of these women to the want of a master's authority to control them.

But I am gone, I fly with what hath pass'd
To the queen's ear, who nought suspects, so sound
She sleeps, by some divinity compos'd.

Then answer, thus, Ulysses wise return'd:
Hush, and disturb her not. Go. Summon first
Those wantons, who have long deserv'd to die*.

He ceas'd; forth flew the matron at his word,
To call those women thither, and, the while,
His herdsmen and his son he thus bespake:

The women come; command them to your aid,
While ye remove the slain, and while ye cleanse
With well-soak'd sponges the resplendent seats
And tables. This confusion thus reduc'd
To decent order, lead the women forth
Into the court, and in the narrow pass
'Twixt wall and scull'ry, with the falchion's edge
Smite them, till each, expiring, shall forget
Her darling suitor, and his stol'n embrace.

He ended, and the damsels came at once
All forth, lamenting, and with tepid tears
Show'ring the ground; with mutual labour first
Bearing the bodies forth into the court,
They lodg'd them in the portico; mean-time

* He permits not Penelope to be summoned, till the delinquents are executed, lest she should intercede for them.—Schol.—B. & C.

Ulysses, with a master's awful tone
Enjoin'd them haste, whom they perforce obey'd.
With sponges and with water next they cleans'd
The thrones and tables, while the busy prince,
Eumæus, and Philæti^{us} purg'd the floor,
And those twelve damsels carried forth the soil.
Thus all erelong adjusted, leading forth
The women next, they shut them close between
The lofty wall and scull'ry, narrow strait
And dreadful, whence no pris'ner might escape.
Then, prudent, thus Telemachus advis'd :

The death of honour would I never grant
To criminals like these, who pour'd contempt
On mine and on my mother's head, and lay
By night enfolded in the suitors' arms.

He said, and noosing a strong galley-rope
To a huge column, led the cord around
The spacious dome, suspended so aloft,
That none with quiv'ring feet might reach the floor.
As when a flight of doves ent'ring the copse,
Or broad-wing'd thrushes, strike against the net
Within, ill rest, entangled, there they find,
So they, suspended by the neck, expir'd
All in one line together. Death abhorr'd !
With restless feet awhile they beat the air,
Then ceas'd. And now through vestibule and hall

They led Melanthius forth. With ruthless steel
They par'd away his ears and nose, pluck'd forth
His parts of shame, devoted to the dogs,
And, still indignant, lopp'd his hands and feet.
Thus all their work accomplish'd, each perform'd
Needful ablution first, then join'd again
Ulysses, who the matron thus bespake :

Bring blast-averting sulphur, nurse, bring fire!
That I may fumigate my walls ; then bid
Penelope with her attendants down,
Nor leave unsummon'd one of all the train.

But Euryclea thus, his nurse, replied :
My son ! thou hast well said ; yet will I first
Serve thee with vest and mantle ; for t' appear
In tatters clad, but ill beseems thee now.

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd :
Not so. Bring fire for fumigation first.

He said ; nor Euryclea, twice enjoin'd,
Longer delay'd, but sulphur brought and fire ;
When he with purifying steams, himself,
Visited ev'ry part, the spacious hall,
The vestibule, the court. Mean-time the nurse
From side to side of all the palace call'd
The women forth t' attend their lord in haste,
And they attended, bearing each a torch.
Assembling fast around him, his return

They gratulated ; each his forehead kiss'd,
And shoulders, and his hands lock'd fast in hers.
He, recognizing all, resistless felt
The gushing tide of mingled grief and joy.

ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTY-THIRD BOOK.

Ulysses, with some difficulty, convinces Penelope of his identity, who, at length, overcome by force of evidence, receives him to her arms with transport. He entertains her with a recital of his adventures, and in his narration the principal events of the poem are recapitulated. In the morning, Ulysses, Telemachus, the herdsman, and the swineherd, depart into the country.

BOOK XXIII.

AND now, with exultation wing'd the nurse
Ascending sought the chamber of the queen,
T' apprise her of Ulysses then below.
Joy brac'd her knees*, with nimbleness of youth.

* Aristarchus, not always a judicious interpreter, seems to err in his explanation of πόδες δ' ὑπεριχταίνοντο, which he tells us signifies, that Euryclea attempted to move nimbly, but, being disabled by age, took short steps, and, in fact, could only hobble. The words Γάγατα δ' ἐρρώσαντο—which Clarke very properly renders—*Genua autem firmiter se movebant*, sufficiently prove, that, her joy inspiring

She stepp'd, and at her ear her thus bespake :

Arise, Penelope ! dear daughter, see
With thy own eyes thy daily wish fulfill'd,
Ulysses is arriv'd ; hath reach'd at last
His native home, and all those suitors proud
Hath slain, who fill'd his household with distress,
His substance wasted, and controll'd his son.

To whom Penelope discreet replied :
Dear nurse ! the Gods have surely ta'en away
Thy judgement ; they transform the wise to fools,
And fools conduct to wisdom, and have made
Thee frantic, whom they made discreet before*.
Why wilt thou mock me (conscious of my woes),
With these extravagances ? Why disturb
Those slumbers sweet, that seal'd so fast mine eyes ?
For such sweet slumbers have I never known,
Since my Ulysses on his voyage sail'd

her with fresh alacrity, she not only attempted a quicker pace, but actually succeeded. Another scholiast therefore, with much more reason on his side, gives us the word *ὑπερεξετείνοντο*, as expressing the true meaning of Homer's *ὑπερικταίνοντο*, understanding the sense to be, that she took long steps, trod firmly, and presently arrived at the chamber.

* Euripides has a similar sentiment—

ὦ Ζεῦ τί δῆτα τὸς τάλαιπῶρος βροτὸς
Φρονεῖν λέγουσι ; σὲ γὰρ ἐξηρτήμεθα,
Δρωμέν τε τοιαῦθ', αἶν' σὸ τυγχάνης θέλων.

Supplices, ver. 734.—C.

To that bad city never to be nam'd.
Down instant to thy place again—begone—
For had another of my maidens dar'd
Disturb my sleep with tidings wild as these,
I had dismiss'd her down into the house
More roughly ; but thine age excuses *thee*.

To whom the venerable matron thus :
I mock thee not, my daughter !—He is come—
Himself, Ulysses, even as I say,
That stranger, object of the scorn of all.
Telemachus hath known him from the first,
But prudently was mute, t' insure the more
The punishment of those intruders here.

So Euryclea ; she transported heard,
And springing from the bed, wrapp'd in her arms
The ancient woman, shedding tears of joy,
And in wing'd accents ardent thus replied :

Ah then, dear nurse inform me ! tell me true !
Hath he indeed arriv'd as thou declar'st ?
How could he slay those shameless ones alone ?
For never were they fewer here than all.

Then Euryclea thus, matron belov'd :
I nothing saw or knew ; but only heard
Groans of the wounded ; in th' interior house
We trembling sat, and ev'ry door was fast.
Thus all remain'd, 'till, from his father sent,

The young prince call'd me forth. I, going, found
Ulysses compass'd by the slaughter'd dead.
They cover'd wide the pavement, heaps on heaps.
It would have cheer'd thy heart to have beheld
Thy husband lionlike with crimson stains
Of slaughter and of dust all dappled o'er.
Heap'd in the portal, at this moment, lie
Their bodies, and he fumigates, mean-time,
The house with sulphur and with flames of fire,
And hath, himself, sent me to bid thee down.
Follow me, then, that ye may give your hearts
To gladness, both, for ye have much endur'd ;
Behold th' event, so long your soul's desire,
Fulfill'd, in presence of his household Gods
Alive he stands ; Telemachus and thee
Finds still at home ; nor hath one suitor scap'd,
Of all that impious throng, his just revenge.

Her answer'd, then, Penelope discreet :
Ah dearest nurse ! indulge not in excess
This dang'rous triumph ; all, as well thou know'st,
Would deem him welcome here, and more than all
Myself, and, offspring of our wedded love,
Telemachus. But these things are not so ;
Some God, resentful of their evil deeds,
And of their biting contumely severe,
Hath them destroy'd ; for whether noble guest
Arriv'd or base, alike they scoff'd at all,

And for their wickedness have therefore died.
But my Ulysses distant far, I know,
From Greece hath perish'd, and returns no more.

To whom thus Euryclea, nurse belov'd:
What word, my daughter, hath escap'd thy lips,
Who thus affirm'st Ulysses, now within
And at his own hearth's side, for ever lost?
Canst thou be thus incredulous? Hear again—
I give thee now proof past dispute, his scar
Imprinted by the wild boar's iv'ry tusk.
Laving him I remark'd it, and desir'd,
Myself, to tell thee, but my wary lord,
Compressing with both hands my lips, forbade.
Come, follow me. My life shall be the pledge.
If I deceive thee, let the bitt'rest death,
That vengeance can devise, requite the fraud.

To whom Penelope, discreet, replied:
Ah, dearest nurse, thou little know'st to search,
With all thy much sagacity, the plans
And counsels of the Gods. But let me hence
Down to my son. I will, at least, behold
The suitors dead, and him by whom they died.

So saying, she left her chamber, musing much
In her descent, if first she should demand
Proof, that the conqu'ror was indeed, himself,
Her lov'd Ulysses, or should fly t' imprint

At once his hands with kisses and his brows.
O'erpassing light the portal-step of stone
She enter'd. He sat opposite, illum'd
By the hearth's sprightly blaze, and close before
A pillar of the dome, with downcast eyes
Expecting what his noble spouse would say,
Seeing him there ; but she sat silent long,
Her faculties in mute amazement held.
By turns she rivetted her eyes on his,
And, seeing him so foul attir'd, by turns
She recognized him not ; at length, displeas'd,
Telemachus her silence thus reprov'd* :

My mother ! ah my hapless and my most
Obdurate mother ! wherefore thus aloof
Shunn'st thou my father, with suspicious looks
Surveying him, with whom thou shouldst exchange

* Eustathius accounts this mute astonishment of Penelope a difficulty never to be solved. For if a God, he says, could counterfeit the scar, why should he be supposed ignorant of the mystery belonging to the bed ? And he judges, that when Penelope, at last convinced of her husband's identity, embraces him, she had no sufficient warrant, on her principle, for doing so, because she suspected a deity, and a deity would have known one sign as well as another. But Clarke accounts the objection too refined and subtle, observing, that when Penelope affirms, that *some God had slain the suitors*, and when she tells Euryclea, that *it is difficult to penetrate the counsels of the Gods*, she means no more than to express the utter incredibility of the tale, that Ulysses is in the house, and has slain all his enemies.

Sweet converse now, close seated at his side?
Another wife lives not, who could endure
Such distance from her husband new-return'd
To his own country in the twentieth year,
After much hardship; but thy firmer heart
Than stone itself retains its temper still*.

To whom Penelope, discreet, replied:
I am all wonder, O my son; my soul
Is stunn'd within me; pow'r to speak to him,
Or to interrogate him, have I none,
Or ev'n to look on him; but if indeed
He be Ulysses, and have reach'd his home,
I shall believe it soon, by proof convinc'd
Of signs, known only to himself and me.

She said; then smil'd the hero toil-inur'd,
And in wing'd accents thus his son enjoin'd:

Leave thou, Telemachus, thy mother here,
To sift and prove me; she will know me soon
More surely; seeing me thus ill attir'd
And squalid, for that cause she scorns me now,

* It is an observation of Eustathius, that Ulysses and his wife being in this interview alike reserved and silent, there could have been no conversation at all, had not Telemachus been of the party. He chides his mother; she replies; a discourse ensues between the hero and his son concerning the measures to be adopted for their security, and thus the awkwardness of the scene is relieved for the present, and till Ulysses, addressing Penelope, affords her at last an opportunity to speak, which, unspoken to, she dared not.—C.

And no belief hath yet, that I am he.
But we have need, thou and myself, of deep
Deliberation. If a man have slain
One only citizen, who leaves behind
Few friends solicitous t' avenge his death,
Yet, flying, he forsakes both friends and home ;
But we the flow'r and strength of all our isle
Have slain—think then, what course must we pursue ?

Him, prudent, then answer'd Telemachus :
Be that thy care, my father ! for report
Proclaims *thee* wisest of mankind, with whom
In ingenuity may none compare.
Lead thou, secure to find in us alert
And ardent followers ; and though pow'r, perchance,
May fail us, courage shall not to the last.

Thus then replied Ulysses, ever-wise :
To me the safest counsel and the best
Seems this. First use the bath ; then, putting on
Your tunics ; bid ye next the maidens take
Their best attire, and let the bard divine
Strike on his tuneful chords a sprightly dance,
That, whether passenger or neighbour hear,
All may suppose glad nuptials held within.
So shall not loud report, that we have slain
All those, alarm the city, till we gain
Our woods and fields, where, once arriv'd, such plans

We will devise, as Jove shall deign t' inspire.

He spake, and all, obedient, in the bath
First lav'd themselves, then put their tunics on;
The damsels also dress'd, and the sweet bard,
Harping melodiously, desires in each
Excited of sweet song and graceful dance.
The palace under all its vaulted roof
Remurmur'd to the feet of sportive youths
And cinctur'd maidens, while no few abroad,
Hearing such revelry within, remark'd—

The queen with many wooers weds at last.
Ah fickle and unworthy fair! too frail
Always to keep inviolate the house
Of her first lord, and wait for his return.

So spake the people; but they little knew
What had befall'n. Eurynome, mean-time,
With bath and unction serv'd th' illustrious chief,
Ulysses, and with mantle and with vest
In his own house attir'd him once again.
Then Pallas over all his features shed
Superiour beauty, dignified his form
With added amplitude, and pour'd his curls
Like hyacinthine garlands from his brows.
As when, by Vulcan and Minerva taught,
Some artist, finishing a graceful work,
Entwines bright silver with a wreath of gold,

Such grace the Goddess o'er his ample chest
 Copious diffus'd, and o'er his manly brows*.
 He, godlike, stepping from the bath, resum'd
 His former seat magnificent, and sat
 Before Penelope, to whom he said :

Princess ! the Pow'rs Olympian never made
 A female heart insensible as thine.

Another wife breathes not, who could endure
 Such distance from her husband new-return'd
 To his own country in the twentieth year,
 After such hardship. Nurse ! prepare a couch
 For my repose ; her adamantine heart
 Yields not, and I must pass the night alone†.

Him answer'd then prudent Penelope :
 My temper, sir ! inclines not me t' extol
 Or to depreciate much, or much admire ;
 Full well I recollect thee as thou wast
 When thou didst sail from Ithaca—Go, nurse,
 Prepare his bed ; yet not within the walls
 Of his own nuptial chamber, which he built

* Quale manus addunt ebori decus ; aut ubi flavo
 Argentum Pariusve lapis circumdatur auro. Æn. I, 596.—C.
 Grace, such as ivory or silver takes
 Or Parian marble, set in purest gold.

† It seems, says Eustathius, as if Ulysses had almost found the
 slaughter of the suitors a work, that might be dispatched in less
 time, than to convince his wife of his identity ; so prudent and
 cautious was she, and of a temper so firm and resolute.—C.

With his own hands, but, placing it without,
There make it thick with fleecy skins beneath,
And with warm cloaks and splendid rugs above.

So spake she, proving * him, and, not untouch'd
With anger at that word, he thus replied :

Thy cruel charge with anguish fills my soul.
Who then hath mov'd my bed ? The task were hard
E'en to an artist ; other than a God
None might with ease displace it ; man alone,
Though vigorous and in his prime of youth,
Could never. In that bed consists a sign ;
For these hands fashion'd it, and none besides.
Within my court, luxuriant, leafy, tall,
And of columnal size, an olive grew.
Around this tree with stones cemented close
I built my nuptial chamber, roof'd it o'er,
And hung the glutinated portals on.
Then, lopping from the sides its ample boughs
And sev'ring near the root its solid bole,
I smooth'd the rugged stump, till it became
A pedestal, and, squaring it by line,

* The proof consisted in this—that the bed, being attached to the stump of an olive tree still rooted, was immovable ; and Ulysses having made it himself, no person present, he must needs be apprised of the impossibility of her orders, if he were indeed Ulysses : accordingly, this demonstration of his identity satisfies all her scruples.

Form'd next the shapely pillar. Last I drill'd
The frame on either side ; and thus my work
Beginning from the stump beneath, ceas'd not
Till all was finish'd, in all parts adorn'd
With ivory, with silver, and with gold,
And interlac'd with purple thongs below.
Such sign I give thee. But if still my bed
Unmov'd remain, or, sever'd from its base
By violence of other hands, have found
A new position, is best known to thee.

He ceas'd ; Penelope with flutt'ring heart
And falt'ring knees, and eyes that stream'd for joy,
Confess'd the proof, sprang to him, threw her arms
Around him, kiss'd his forehead, and replied :

Ulysses ! wisest at all other times
Of humankind, ah ! be not angry now,
Nor frown on me ! The Gods themselves ordain'd
Our ceaseless suff'rings ; envied us the bliss
Of undivided union sweet enjoy'd
Through life, from early youth to latest age.
No. Be not angry now ; forgive the fault,
That I embrac'd thee not as soon as seen ;
For never hath my spirit lost the dread,
Lest some deceitful alien should, perchance,
Beguile me, for our house draws num'rous such.

Jove's daughter, Argive Helen, ne'er had giv'n
Free entertainment to a stranger's love,
Had she foreknown, that, by the warlike sons
Of Greece regain'd, she should at length return.
But Heav'n incited her to that offence,
Else had she never in her heart conceiv'd
A crime, which, perpetrated, prov'd the source
Of all Achaia's woes, and of our own.
But since thus punctually thou hast describ'd
Our bed, which never mortal yet beheld,
Ourselves except and Actoris my maid,
Giv'n me, what time I left my native home,
By good Icarius, and who kept the door,
Though hard to be convinc'd, at last I yield*.

So saying, with fresh sympathy she touch'd
His inmost soul, and folding in his arms
His sweet and most unblemish'd spouse, he wept.
Welcome as land appears to those who swim,
Whose gallant bark, by winds and rolling waves

* Penelope, having tried her husband's patience by her long delay to acknowledge him, makes him ample compensation at last, rejoicing in him with rapture, enfolding him in her arms, supplicating him to pardon her tedious hesitation, accounting and apologizing for it, complimenting him with an eulogium, short indeed, but such as the time allowed, and commiserating the woes he had suffered in his wanderings.—Eustath.—C.

Assail'd, hath perish'd in the boundless sea,
A mariner or two, perchance, escape
The foamy flood, and, swimming, reach the land,
Weary indeed, and with incrusted brine
All rough, but O, how glad to climb the coast!
So welcome in her eyes Ulysses seem'd,
Around whose neck winding her snowy arms,
She clung as she would lose him never more.
Thus had they wept till rosy-finger'd morn
Had found them weeping, but Minerva check'd
Night's almost finish'd course, and held, mean-time,
The golden Dawn close pris'ner in the Deep,
Forbidding her to lead her coursers forth,
Lampus and Phaëthon, that furnish light
For all mankind, and join them to the yoke*.
Then thus Laertes' son his spouse address'd:
My love; not yet we have attain'd the close
Of all our suff'rings, but unmeasur'd toil
Arduous remains, which I must still achieve.
For so the spirit of the Theban seer
Taught me, what time solicitous t' inquire
Of mine and of my people's safe return

* Homer gives Aurora a chariot and pair; Lycophron and others allow her only Pegasus. Ovid harnesses four to the chariot of the sun.—B. & C.

I journey'd down to Pluto's drear abode.
But let us hence to bed, once more t' enjoy
Tranquil repose. My love, make no delay.

Him answer'd then prudent Penelope :
Thou shalt to bed, what time soe'er thou wilt,
Since, by the Gods conducted, thou hast reach'd
Thy mansion, and thy native shores again.
But since, by sage Tiresias taught, thou know'st,
That thou hast labours still t' achieve, declare
What labours ? I shall learn them, as I judge,
Hereafter, why shouldst thou conceal them now ?

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied :
Ah conversant with wo ! why wouldst thou learn
That tale ? but I will tell it thee at large.
Thou wilt not hear with joy, nor shall myself
With joy rehearse it ; for he bade me seek
City after city, bearing, as I go,
A shapely oar, till I shall find, at length,
A people who the sea know not, nor eat
Food salted ; they trim galley crimson-prow'd
Have ne'er beheld, nor yet smooth-shaven oar.
With which the vessel wing'd scuds o'er the waves.
He gave me also this authentic sign,
Which I will tell thee. In what place soe'er
I chance to meet a trav'ller, who shall name

The oar, on my broad shoulder borne, a van*;
He bade me, planting it on that same spot,
Worship the King of Ocean with a bull,
A ram, and a lascivious boar, then seek
My home again, and sacrifice at home
A hecatomb in honour of the Gods,
Deathless possessors of th' expanse above.
So shall I die, at length, the gentlest death
Remote from Ocean; it shall find me late,
In soft serenity of age, the chief
Of a blest people.—These events, the seer
Tiresias said, should surely come to pass.

Him answer'd then Penelope discreet:
If Heav'n ordain thee to a calm old age,
Hope lives, that all our woes shall have an end.

Such was their mutual conf'rence sweet; mean-time
Eurynome and Euryclea dress'd
Their bed by light of the clear torch, and when
Dispatchful they had spread it broad and deep,
The ancient nurse retiring sought her own.
Then came Eurynome, to whom in trust
The chambers appertain'd, and with a torch
Conducted them to rest; she introduc'd
The happy pair, and went; transported they

* See the note on the same passage, Book XI, l. 156.

To rites connubial intermitted long,
And now recover'd, gave themselves again*.
Mean-time, the prince, the herdsman, and the good
Eumæus, to their feet affording rest,
Ceas'd from the dance; they made the women cease
Also, and to their sev'ral chambers all
Beneath the dark high-vaulted roof retir'd.

At length, with conjugal endearment both
Sate, Ulysses tasted and his spouse
The sweets of mutual converse. She rehears'd,
Noblest of women, all her num'rous woes
Beneath that roof sustain'd, while she beheld
The profligacy of the suitor-throng,
Who in their wooing had consum'd his herds
And fattened flocks, and drawn his vessels dry;
While brave Ulysses, in his turn rehears'd
Whate'er his foes had suffer'd at his hands,
And what himself at theirs; he told her all;
She listen'd charm'd, nor sleep once seal'd her eyes,

* Aristophanes the grammarian and Aristarchus chose that the Odyssey should end here;—B. & C. but the story is not properly concluded till, the tumult occasioned by the slaughter of so many princes being composed, Ulysses finds himself once more in peaceable possession of his country. The sequel is likewise necessary on another account, the poet himself having prepared us to expect it. See line 160 of this Book.—C.

While aught of all his toils untold remain'd.
First he recited his success in arms
Against the Cicons, and his safe escape
From the Lotophagi with all his crews.
The Cyclops' deeds he told her next, and how
He well aveng'd on him his noble friends,
Whom, pitiless, the monster had devour'd.
How to the isle of Æolus he came,
Who welcom'd him and safe dismiss'd him thence,
Although not destin'd to regain so soon
His native land ; for o'er the fishy deep
Loud tempests snatch'd him sighing back again.
How also to Telepylus he sail'd,
Town of the Læstrygonians, who destroy'd,
His own except, his ships with all his friends.
Of guileful Circe too he spake, deep-skill'd
In various artifice, and how he reach'd
With sails and oars the squalid realms of death,
Desirous to consult the prophet there,
Theban Tiresias ; and how there he view'd
All his companions, and the mother bland,
Who bare and nurs'd him in his infant years.
How next he heard the Sirens in one strain
All chiming sweet, and how he reach'd the rocks
Erratic, Scylla and Charybdis dire,

Which none secure from injury may pass.
Then, how the partners of his voyage slew
The Sun's own beeves, and how the Thund'rer Jove
Hurl'd down his smoky bolts into his bark,
Depriving him at once of all his crew,
Whose dreadful fate he yet, himself, surviv'd.
How to Ogygia's isle he came, where dwelt
The nymph Calypso, who, enamour'd, wish'd
T' espouse him, and within her ample cave
Detain'd, and fed, and promis'd him a life
Exempt for ever from the sap of age,
But him sway'd not; nor fail'd he to relate
How, sore distress'd, he reach'd Phæacia's coast,
Where all alike rever'd him as a God,
And whence, enriching him with brass and gold
And costly raiment first, they sent him home.
At this last word, oblivious slumber sweet
Fell on him, dissipating all his cares.

Mean-time, Minerva, Goddess azure-ey'd,
On other thoughts intent, soon as she deem'd
Ulysses with connubial joys suffic'd,
And with sweet sleep, at once from Ocean rous'd
The golden-axled chariot of the morn,
T' illumine Earth; when from his fleecy couch
The hero sprang, and thus his spouse enjoin'd:

O consort dear! enough we both have giv'n
To sorrow, thou, with never-ceasing tears
My tedious absence mourning, and myself
Not mourning less for that the Pow'rs of Heav'n
So long withheld me from my native shores.
But since, in this dear nuptial bed we meet
Once more, keep thou my stores uninjur'd here,
And soon will I replace my flocks destroy'd
By those imperious suitors, and the Greeks
Shall add yet others till my folds be fill'd.
But to the woodlands go I now—to see
My noble father, who for my sake mourns
Continual; as for thee, my love, although
I know thee wise, I give thee thus in charge.
The sun no sooner shall ascend, than all
Will learn, that I have slain the suitors here.
Thou, therefore, with thy female train abide
Sequester'd in thy close recess above,
Nor question ask, nor, curious, look abroad*.

He said, and putting on bright armour, call'd
Telemachus, Philœtius, and his friend
Eumæus, bidding each his arms resume;

* That, seeming ignorant of all that had passed, she might be deemed innocent by the angry multitude, and suffer no injury from them.—C.

Nor they complied not, but, resuming each
His armour, op'd the gates and issu'd forth
Ulysses at their head. Day's earliest dawn
Now streak'd the skies, but Pallas them, involv'd
In darkness still, led soon into the fields.

ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK.

Mercury conducts the souls of the suitors down to Ades. Ulysses discovers himself to Laertes, and quells, by the aid of Minerva, an insurrection of the people resenting the death of the suitors.

BOOK XXIV.

*CYLLENIAN Hermes now call'd forth the souls
Of all the suitors; with his golden wand,
Of pow'r to seal in balmy sleep whose eyes
Soe'er he will, and open them again,

* There were those among the ancients, who rejected as much of this book as relates the descent of the suitors into the shades under conduct of Mercury, and the dialogue between the departed heroes. Their reasons were chiefly these: First, that Homer nowhere else ascribes this function to Mercury, nor gives him the epithet Cyllenius. Secondly (but this second reason resolves itself into the first), because the souls of the suitors do not descend of

He led them gibb'ring down into the shades*.
 As, in some hollow rock, the cluster'd bats,
 Drawn from the chink by force in which they slept,
 Take wing and, squeaking, flutter all around,
 So, after bounteous Mercury, the ghosts
 Troop'd downward gibb'ring all the dreary way*.
 The streams of Ocean, the Leucadian rock,
 The Sun's pale postern, and the land of Dreams
 Passing, they came at once into the meads
 Of Asphodel, by shadowy forms possess'd
 Of mortal men deceas'd†. They found the souls

their own accord, and without the aid of a conductor, as all others do in the Iliad. Thirdly, because, though not yet partakers of the rites of burial, they are admitted to the shades. And, fourthly, because on no other occasion has Homer specified the number of the Muses. There were others, who, for reasons similar to these, rejected the whole book; such as Aristarchus and Aristophanes the grammarian. But the scholiast justly observes, that the majesty of the verse alone is sufficient to overrule them all, and to evince it the work of Homer.—B. & C.

Cyllene was a mountain of Arcadia, and Mercury, being worshipped with particular honours by those who dwelt in the neighbourhood of it, had thence the epithet Cyllenius.—B. & C.

* Τελίεσαι—τερριγύσαι—

————— the ghosts

Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

SHAKESP.

† This passage is thus explained by Diodorus Siculus:

“ The Nile is named Oceanus by Homer, because the Ægyptians so named it. By the gates of the Sun he intends the city of Helio-

Of brave Pelides there, and of his friend
Patroclus, of Antilochus renown'd,
And of the mightier Ajax, for his form
And for his bulk of all Achaia's sons
(Achilles sole except), the most admir'd.
These waited on Achilles. Then appear'd
The mournful ghost of Agamemnon, son
Of Atreus, compass'd by the ghosts of all,
Who shar'd his fate beneath Ægysthus' roof,
And him the ghost of Peleus' son bespake:
Atrides! of all heroes thee we deem'd
Most favour'd by the Gods, for that thy sway
Extended over such a glorious host
At Ilium, scene of sorrow to the Greeks.
Death conquers all who live, and from the birth
Thyself wast doom'd the victim of his pow'r,
But oh! that thou hadst died at Troy, with all

polis. The meadows of which he speaks, are those which lie on the confines of the lake Acherusia and near to Memphis; beautiful meadows, well watered, and abounding with reeds and lotus. It is with singular propriety, that he here supposes the residence of the deceased, for the Ægyptians, having ferried the dead over the river and the lake Acherusia, here deposited them in great numbers, and in sepulchres the most magnificent.—The Greeks and the Ægyptians even now agree in many other fictions concerning the state of the departed.”—C.

Various other explanations are given, but this appears to be the most rational.

Thy regal state surrounded ! not a Greek
Of all our tribes should then have fail'd t' assist
At thy funereal rites, and thou hadst left
Great glory to thy son ; but Fate ordain'd
A death, alas ! how terrible, for thee.

To whom Atrides' spirit thus replied :
Blest son of Peleus, semblance of the Gods,
At Ilium, far from Argos, fall'n ! for whom
Contending, many a Trojan, many a chief
Of Greece died also, while thy body, whelm'd
In circling dust, a wide-spread ruin lay,
Nor chariot thee nor steed could int'rest more !
All day we wag'd the battle, nor at last
Desisted, but for tempests sent from Jove.
At length, we bore into the Grecian fleet
Thy body from the field ; there first we cleans'd
With tepid baths and oil'd thy shapely corse,
Then plac'd thee on thy bier, while many a Greek
Around thee wept, and shore his locks for thee.
Thy mother also (those dread tidings heard),
With all her nymphs emerging from the Deep,
And all, as with one voice, bewailing thee,
Came thither. Terrour then seiz'd all the Greeks,
And ev'ry warrior had return'd on board
That moment, had not Nestor, ancient chief,
Illum'd by long experience, interpos'd ;

He, wisest ever, thus our host bespake :

Fly not, ye warlike youths ! Ye Grecians, stay !
This is the Goddess-mother ; Thetis comes,
With all her nymphs emerging from the Deep,
T' enhance the fun'ral honours of her son.

So he ; and, by his admonition staid,
The Greeks fled not. Then all around thee stood
The daughters of the Ancient of the Deep,
Bewailing thy decease ; with heav'nly robes
They cloth'd thy corse, and all the Muses nine
Deplor'd thee in full choir with sweetest tones
Responsive, nor one Grecian hadst thou seen
Dry-ey'd, such grief the Muses mov'd in all.
Thee, sev'nteen days, we, day and night, deplor'd,
Both Gods and men ; and on the eighteenth day,
Slaught'ring the fattest of the flocks and herds
Around it, gave thy body to the flames
Cloth'd in celestial raiment, while with oil
And richest honey mix'd we fed the fire,
And all our heroes, clad in radiant arms,
Both horse and foot, encompassing thy pile,
Clash'd on their shields, and deaf'ning was the din*.

* So Virgil, *Æn.* XI, 188.

Ter circum accensos, cincti fulgentibus armis,
Decurrêre rogos ; ter mœstum funeris ignem
Lustravêre in equis, ululatusque ore dedere.—C.

But when the force of Vulcan had at length
 Consum'd thee, mingling, at the dawn of day,
 Thy bones with lard and undiluted wine,
 We stor'd them in a golden urn supplied
 By Thetis, which from Bacchus, as she said,
 Herself receiv'd, and He from Vulcan's hand*.
 Within that vase, Achilles, treasur'd lie
 Thine and the bones of thy departed friend
 Patroclus; but a sep'rate urn we gave
 To those of brave Antilochus, of all
 The Greeks, Patroclus slain, thy fav'rite most.
 Each urn we compass'd with a noble tomb
 (We warriors of the sacred Argive host),
 On a tall promontory shooting far
 Into the spacious Hellespont, that all
 Who live, and who shall yet be born, may view

Thrice, clad in burnish'd arms, they cours'd about
 The kindled pile, thrice, mounted as they were,
 Survey'd the mournful fires, and wail'd aloud.

* And again—Æn. VI, 226.

Postquam collapsi cineres, et flamma quievit,
 Relliquias vino et bibulam lavêre favillam;
 Ossaque lecta cado texit Chorinæus ahenô.—C.

The ashes sunk, and flames at rest, with wine
 The relics and the thirsty ember-heaps
 They drench'd, and Chorinæus stor'd the bones
 Within a brazen vase. —————

Thy record, even from the distant waves*.
Then, by permission from the Gods obtain'd,
To the Achaian chiefs in circus met
Thetis appointed games. I have beheld
The burial rites of many a hero bold,
When, on the death of some great chief, the youths
Well-girt have rush'd to contest for the prize,
But sight of those with wonder fill'd me most,
So glorious past all others were the games,
By silver-footed Thetis giv'n for thee,
For thou wast ever favour'd of the Gods.
Thus, hast thou not, Achilles! ev'n in death,
Foregone thy glory, but thy fair report
Is universal among all mankind;
But, as for me, what recompense had I,
My warfare clos'd? for whom, at my return,
Jove plann'd so dire a death, the bloody deed
Of fell Ægisthus and my murd'ress wife†.

Thus, mutual, they conferr'd; mean-time approach'd
Wing-footed Hermes, herald of the skies,
Conducting thither all the shades of those
Slain by Ulysses. At that sight amaz'd

* Strabo testifies, that the temple and tomb of Achilles were to be seen in his time on the promontory of Sigæum;—B. & C. the tombs also of Patroclus and Antilochus, to whom as well as to Ajax the Trojans offered sacrifice.—C.

† See the story related at large by Agamemnon to Ulysses.—Od. XI, 490.

Both mov'd toward them. Agamemnon's shade
(For they had met in Ithaca) knew well
The spectre of Melanthius' haughty son
Amphimedon, of whom he thus inquir'd :

Amphimedon ! by what disastrous chance,
Coevals as ye seem, and of an air
Distinguish'd all, descend ye to the Deeps ?
For not the chosen youths of a whole town
Should form a nobler band. Perish'd ye sunk
Amid vast billows and rude tempests rais'd
By Neptune's power ? or on dry land through force
Of lawless ravagers, who would have seiz'd
Your flocks and herds ? or fighting to secure
From hostile power your city and your wives ?
Resolve me ; I was once a guest of thine.
Remember'st not what time at your abode
With godlike Menelaus I arriv'd,
That we might win Ulysses, with his fleet
To follow us to Troy ? that labour cost
The Grecian fleet a tedious month's delay,
And scarce, with all that we could urge, we gain'd
The city-spoiling hero's aid at last*.

* Because Ulysses, not through fear, but by dint of his own forecast and sagacity knowing well the difficulties of such a war, was unwilling to engage in it. On which account probably it was, as Eustathius observes, that Agamemnon, while he was in Ithaca, dwelt with Melanthius, and not with Ulysses.

To whom the spectre of Melanthius' son :
Illustrious Agamemnon, king of men !
All this I bear in mind, and will rehearse
The manner of our most disastrous end.
Believing brave Ulysses lost, we sought
His wife in marriage ; our unwelcome suit
She neither ratified nor yet refus'd,
But, planning dire destruction for us all,
This novel stratagem at last devised.
Beginning, in her own recess, a web
Of slend'rest thread, and of a length and breadth
Unusual, thus the suitors she bespake :

Princes, my suitors ! since the noble chief
Ulysses is no more, enforce not yet
My nuptials ; wait till I shall finish first
A fun'ral robe (lest all my threads decay)
Which for the ancient hero I prepare,
Laertes, looking for the mournful time,
When ruthless fate shall close his languid eyes
So fast, that he shall ope them never more ;
Else I the censure dread of all my sex,
Should he, so wealthy, want at last a shroud.

So spake the queen ; and, unsuspecting, we
Consented readily. Thenceforth, all day
She wove her ample web, and by the aid
Of torches ravell'd it again at night.

Three years she thus by stratagem our suit
Eluded safe, but when the fourth arriv'd,
And the same season, after many moons
And fleeting days, return'd, a damsel then
Of her attendants, conscious of the fraud,
Reveal'd it, and we found her pulling loose
The splendid web. Thus, thro' constraint, at length,
She finish'd it, and in her own despatch.
But when, at length, sun-bright or as the moon,
She spread the new-blanch'd texture in our view,
Then, under conduct of some adverse Pow'r,
Ulysses reach'd a cottage at th' extreme
Of all his pastures, where his swineherd dwells,
To which came also, from the Pylian shore,
The godlike hero's son ; and when the death
Of all the suitors they had there devis'd,
They sought the city ; but Ulysses last,
And first Telemachus. The father came
Conducted by the swineherd, and attir'd
In tatters foul ; a mendicant he seem'd,
Time-worn, and halted on a staff. So clad,
And ent'ring on the sudden, he deceiv'd
The mem'ries even of our eldest there,
And we revil'd and smote him ; he, although
Beneath his own roof smitten and reproach'd,
With patience suffer'd it awhile, but rous'd

At length by thunder-bearing Jove, convey'd,
In concert with Telemachus, his arms
And armour to the chamber of his son
At the house-top, and barr'd the massy doors.
Then, in his subtlety the queen he bade
A contest institute with bow and rings
Between th' ill-fated suitors ; whence ensu'd
Slaughter to all*. No suitor there had pow'r
To bend that stubborn bow, but all alike
Too feeble prov'd ; and when the weapon huge
At length was offer'd to Ulysses' hands,
With clamour'd menaces we bade the swain
Withhold it still, plead for it as he might ;
Telemachus alone, with loud command
Bade give it him, and his illustrious sire,
Receiving in his hand the bow, with ease
Bent it, and sped a shaft through all the rings.
Then, springing to the portal-steps, he pour'd
His arrows forth, peer'd terrible around,
Pierc'd king Antinoüs, and, aiming sure
The deadly darts, pierc'd many a suitor more,

* This was not true in fact, as Eustathius remarks, for the design to propose this trial to the suitors originated with Penelope. But Barnes well replies, that, though it was false, it would naturally appear true to the suitors, from the moment when Ulysses discovered himself to them.—C.

Till in one common carnage heap'd we lay.
 Some God, it was most clear, vouchsaf'd them aid,
 Such ardour urg'd them, and with such dispatch
 They slew us on all sides ; hideous were heard
 The groans of dying men fell'd to the ground
 With head-strokes rude, and the floor swam with blood.
 Such, royal Agamemnon ! was the fate,
 By which we perish'd, all whose bodies lie
 Unburied still, and in Ulysses' house,
 For tidings none have yet our friends alarm'd
 And kindred, who might cleanse from sable gore
 Our clotted wounds, and mourn us on the bier,
 Sad rites ! but needful to th' unhappy dead.

Him answer'd, then, the shade of Atreus' son :
 O happy offspring of Laertes ! shrewd
 Ulysses ! matchless valour hast thou shown,
 Recov'ring thus thy wife ; how kind and good
 Was also thy Penelope to thee !
 And her remembrance of the spouse, her choice
 In early youth, how faithful and how true !
 Thy glory, by superiour merit earn'd,
 Shall never fade, and when the tuneful bard
 Shall purpose his divinest song, the Gods
 Shall make thy chaste Penelope the theme.
 Not such was Clytemnestra, she contriv'd

Her husband's death ; no praises shall attend
Her name in song ; and even virtuous wives
Shall suffer shame, suspected for her sake.

Thus they, beneath the vaulted roof obscure
Of Pluto's mansion, mutually conferr'd.

Mean-time, descending from the city-gates,
They quickly reach'd the cultivated farm,
Which old Laertes had with strenuous toil
Won from the rugged waste. There stood his house
Amidst encircling cabins, where his hinds,
Whose aid he needed, and whose labours pleas'd
And satisfied him, ate and took repose.

There also dwelt an old Sicilian dame,
Who serv'd and tended with assiduous care,
In his sequester'd home, their ancient lord.
Then thus Ulysses to his followers spake :

Haste now, and, ent'ring, slay ye of the swine
The best for our regale* ; myself, the while,
Will prove my father, if his eye be true,
To show me to him, or if absence long
Have worn all knowledge of me from his mind.

He said, and gave his armour to the care

* The poet artfully contrives to dispose thus of Telemachus and the servants, that the interview between Ulysses and his father may be free from all constraint and interruption.—C.

Of his own servants ; they with hasty steps
The mansion sought, and he the garden-plot,
To prove his father. There he neither found,
At his descent into the fruitful scene,
Dolius nor Dolius' sons, nor other swain
Or lab'rer ; they were occupied elsewhere,
And, with the ancient hind himself, employ'd
Collecting thorns, with which to fence the grove.
In that umbrageous spot he found alone
Laertes, hoeing weeds around a plant ;
Sordid his tunic was, with many a patch
Unseemly mended ; leathern were his greaves,
Thong-tied and also patch'd, a frail defence
Against sharp thorns, while gloves secur'd his hands
From briar-points, and on his head he bore
A goatskin casque, indulging hopeless wo.
No sooner then the chief, his noble son,
Saw him age-worn and wretched, than he paus'd
Beneath a lofty peartree's shade to weep.
There standing much he mus'd, whether, at once,
Kissing and clasping him, to tell him all,
By what means he had reach'd his native shore,
Or first by questions curious and minute
To prove him. His discreeter course, at length,
He deem'd it were t' assume the stranger's tone,

And in that mind approach'd him*. He the soil
Still heav'd and weeded, bending o'er his work,
Around the plant, when his illustrious son,
Now standing close beside him, thus began :

Old sir ! thou art no novice in these toils
Of culture, but thy garden thrives ; the plants,
Vines, figs, pears, olives, flow'rs, from side to side
Of all thy ground, commend thy skill and care.
But pardon my free censure, if I say,
That thou art heedless of thyself, at once
Oppress'd with age, sun-parch'd, and ill-attir'd.
Not for thy scanty service sake thy lord
Neglects thee thus, who by thy features seem'st,
And by thy stately port, thyself a king.
Old age is privileg'd. A man like thee,
First bath'd and fed, should sink to soft repose.
But tell me truth—whose husbandman art thou,
And whose this garden ? answer me besides,
For I would learn ? have I indeed arriv'd
In Ithaca ? this moment one who pass'd
Such information gave me ; but he seem'd

* The Greek word here is similar in signification to ἐπιχερτομέων in the 24th Book of the Iliad. See the note on line 807 of that book.

There the meaning is *falso metû*, and here it is *falsâ specie ludere*.

Uncouth and rude, would neither speak nor hear,
When I demanded if a friend of mine
Live still, or have already sought the shades.
For I will tell thee ; therefore mark. Long since
Within my native mansion I receiv'd
A certain stranger, whom I found a guest
To me far most acceptable of all,
Whom I had shelter'd, from what land soe'er,
Beneath my roof. He was by birth, he said,
Ithacan, and Laertes claim'd his sire,
Son of Arcesias. Him conducting home,
I entertain'd him with the best I might,
And prov'd by gifts his welcome at my board.
I gave him seven talents of wrought gold,
A goblet, argent all, with flow'rs emboss'd,
Twelve single cloaks, twelve carpets, mantles twelve
Of brightest lustre, with as many vests,
And added four fair damsels, whom he chose
Himself, well born and well-accomplish'd all.

Then, weeping, thus his ancient sire replied :
Stranger ! thou hast, for certain, reach'd the land
Of thy inquiry, but thou find'st it held
By a rude race, and lawless. Vain, alas !
Were all thy num'rous gifts ; yet hadst thou found
Him living here in Ithaca, thy gifts,
And thy kind treatment of him, at his hands

Had found just recompense, and thou hadst left
Our city well-content. But tell me truth.
What years have pass'd? how many, since my son
Partook thy friendly banquet? for alas!
That poor ill-fated wanderer was he.
But him, far distant both from friends and home,
Either the rav'ning fishes of the Deep
Have eaten, or wild beasts and fowls of prey,
Nor was his mother or myself ordain'd,
To bathe his shrouded body with our tears,
Nor yet Penelope, the chaste, the rich,
To close her husband's eyes, and with her voice
Of shrill lament to wail him on his bier,
Sad tribute all! but pleasing to the dead.
But tell me also thou, for I would learn,
Who art thou? whence? where born? and sprung
from whom?

The bark in which thy godlike friends and thou
Arriv'd, what station have ye giv'n her here?
Or cam'st thou but as passenger on board
Another's bark, who landed thee and went?

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
I will with all simplicity relate
What thou hast ask'd. Of Alybas* am I,

* Alybas, in the catalogue called Alybe, was according to some a city of Italy, named also Metapontus; but according to others a city of Thrace.—C.

There stands my mansion, and my wealthy sire
Apheidas is, king Polypæmon's son ;
Myself am nam'd Eperitus ; I come
Driv'n from the shores of Sicily to these
By furious winds, with which I strove in vain,
And yonder, from your city far remote,
Stands on the meadow's verge my galley moor'd.
Five years have pass'd, since the unhappy chief,
Ulysses, left my country ; yet the birds
At his departure hover'd on the right,
And, in that sign rejoicing, I dismiss'd
Him joyful also, for alike we hop'd,
To mix in social intercourse, and make
Exchange of friendly pledges once again.

He spake ; then sorrow as a sable cloud
Involv'd Laertes ; gath'ring with both hands
The dust, he pour'd it on his rev'rend head
With many a piteous groan. Ulysses' heart
Commotion felt, and his stretch'd nostrils throbb'd
With 'agony close-pent, while fix'd he view'd
His father : then with sudden force he sprang
Toward him, clasp'd, and kiss'd him, and exclaim'd :

My father ! I am he. Thou seest thy son,
Absent these twenty years, at last return'd.
But bid thy sorrow cease ; suspend henceforth

All lamentation ; for I tell thee true,
But hastily, for so the time demands,
I have slain all the suitors at our home,
And all their taunts and injuries aveng'd.

Then answer thus Laertes quick return'd :
If thou hast come again, and art indeed
My son Ulysses, give me then the proof
Indubitable, that I may believe.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
View first the scar, which with his iv'ry tusk
A wild boar gave me, when, at thy command
And at my mother's, to Parnassus' foot,
Where dwelt her sire Autolycus, I sped,
Seeking the gifts, which, while a guest of yours,
He promis'd should be mine. Accept beside
This proof. I will enum'rate all the trees,
Which, walking with thee in this cultur'd spot
(Boy then) I begg'd, and thou confirm'dst my own.
We pac'd between them, and thou mad'st me learn
The name of each. Thou gav'st me thirteen pears*,
Ten apples*, forty figs*, and fifty rows
Of vines didst promise me, their alleys clear

* The fruit is here used for the tree that bore it, as it is in the Greek ; the Latins used the same mode of expression, neither is it uncommon in our language.

From all plants else*. What time propitious Jove
Matures the full-grown fruitage, on those vines
Huge, of all sorts, the luscious clusters hung.

He said ; with falt'ring knees and throbbing heart
Those proofs acknowledging. Laertes cast
His arms around him, and Ulysses held
Close to his bosom press'd his fainting sire,
Till, his exhausted spirit and his pow'r
Of speech restor'd, the senior thus exclaim'd :

Still, then, ye Gods ! your influence unimpair'd,
Ye govern all beneath, if just revenge,
At last, have reach'd indeed those guilty men.
But terrour shakes me, lest, incens'd, erelong
All Ithaca flock hither, and dispatch
Swift messengers with these dread tidings charg'd
To ev'ry Cephallenian state around.

Him answer'd then Ulysses ever-wise :
Take courage, and, dismissing all such fears,
Seek now, with me, thy mansion that adjoins
The garden, whither I have sent my son,
Philœtius, and Eumæus, with command,
That they prepare in haste to spread the board.

* This according to Clarke, whose judgement a translator may always safely follow, is the true meaning of *διατρυγίος* ; though it is a word concerning the import of which the commentators differ widely.

So they conferr'd, and to Laertes' house
Pass'd on together; there arriv'd, they found
Telemachus, with his attendant swains,
Busied in preparation of the meats,
And mingling wine; but, ere they sat to feed,
His old Sicilian matron bath'd and oil'd
And wrapp'd Laertes round in fresh attire,
And Pallas, drawing nigh, dilated more
His limbs, and gave his whole majestic form
Increase of amplitude. He left the bath.
His son amaz'd as he had seen a God
Alighted newly from the skies, exclaim'd:

My father! all decrepitude of age
Hath left thee; surely some immortal Pow'r
Hath giv'n thee back thy youthful prime again!

Then thus replied his venerable sire:
Jove! Pallas! Phœbus! O that I had fought
Beside thee yesterday, my force the same,
As when I led my Cephallenian host
To yonder continent, and overthrew
The tow'rs of Nericus*! If such in arms,
And such as then in vigour, I had fac'd
With thee the suitors, surely thou hadst felt

* Nericus is understood by Strabo to have been the same with Leucas; it was once joined to the continent, but the Corinthians, cutting off the isthmus, made an island of it.—C.

Thy soul, so deeply wounded, fill'd at length
With comfort for the many slain by me.

Such was their confèrence ; and now, the task
Of preparation ended, and the feast
Set forth, on couches and on thrones they sat,
And, rang'd in order due, took each his share.
Then, ancient Dolius, and with him his sons,
Arriv'd from work, all weary, summon'd home
By the Sicilian matron wont to serve
The youths with food, and with especial care
T' attend their father, worn with many years.
They, seeing and recalling soon to mind
Ulysses, in the middle mansion stood
Wond'ring, when thus Ulysses with a voice
Of some reproof, but gentle, them bespake :

Sit to the board, old friend ! and cease to gaze
With mute astonishment ; for, though distress'd
With hunger, we have now long-time abstain'd,
Expecting ev'ry moment thy return.

He said ; then Dolius with expanded arms
Sprang right toward Ulysses, seiz'd his hand,
Kiss'd it, and in wing'd accents thus replied :

Dear master ! since the Gods, at our request,
And past our hopes, have giv'n thee to return,
Hail, and be happy, and Heav'n make thee such !
But tell me truly ; knows the prudent queen

That thou hast safe arriv'd, or shall we send
Ourselves a herald with the joyful news?

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied:
My friend of many years! release thy mind
From that solicitude, she knows it well.

He spake, and Dolius, satisfied, resum'd
His wonted seat, while, in like sort, his sons,
All welcoming Ulysses, grasp'd his hand,
Then sat beside their father; thus beneath
Laertes' roof they joyful took repast.

But Fame with rapid haste the city roam'd
In ev'ry part, promulging in all ears
The suitors' horrid fate. Those tidings urg'd
The parents of the suitors quickly forth,
And, from all sides of Ithaca, with groans,
And mingled mutt'rings of revenge, they sought
Ulysses' gates. Producing thence the dead,
They gave immediate burial to their own,
But those of other cities sent on board
Swift-sailing fish-boats to their sev'ral homes.
All hasted then to council; sorrow wrung
Each parent's heart, and soon as on full seats
The whole assembled senate sat, uprose
Eupithes first; for anguish on his soul
Prey'd, past endurance, for Antinoüs' sake,
His darling son, slain foremost of them all.

His loss with tears deploring, thus he said :

My friends! no trivial fruits the Grecians reap
Of this man's doings. *Those* whom, when he sail'd,
On board his barks he took, a num'rous train
And valiant,—*those* with all his barks he lost,
And *these*, our noblest, slew at his return.
But haste, and ere he reach by swift escape
The Pylian, or perhaps the sacred shore
Of Elis by the brave Epeans rul'd,
Pursue him, or eternal shame is ours ;
And if we visit not with swift revenge
The murd'ers of those, whom most we lov'd,
Our sons and brothers, may my future days
Prove cheerless all, and instant death alone
Seem worth a wish to me ! Then fly we swift,
To seize them all, ere they yet shall cross the Deep.

So spake he weeping, and soft pity mov'd
In ev'ry breast. Then newly from the bands
Of sleep releas'd came Medon leading forth
The sightless Phemius from Ulysses' house.
Both stood before them. Wonder at that sight
Seiz'd all, when Medon, prudent, thus began :

Hear me, my countrymen ! Ulysses plann'd,
With no disapprobation of the Gods,
The deed that ye deplore. I saw, myself,
A Pow'r immortal at the hero's side,

Clad in the form of Mentor; now the God,
In front apparent, led him on, and now,
From side to side of all the palace, urg'd
To flight the suitors; heaps on heaps they fell.

He said; then terrour wan seiz'd ev'ry cheek,
And Halitherses, hero old, the son
Of Mastor, who alone among them all
By past experience taught had skill to judge
The future also, prudent, thus began:

Ye men of Ithaca! now list to me.
These evils have ye caus'd yourselves, my friends!
By your own negligence; for when myself
And noble Mentor counsell'd you to check
Th' excesses of your sons, ye would not hear.
Great was their wickedness, and flagrant wrong
They wrought, the wealth devouring and the wife
Dishonouring of an illustrious chief,
Whom they deem'd destin'd never to return.
Now, therefore, hear me. Go not; lest ye pull
Fresh mischief on your own devoted heads.

He ended; then with boist'rous roar (although
The wiser kept their seats) upsprang the most,
For Halitherses pleas'd them not, they chose
Eupithes' counsel rather; all at once
To arms they flew, and clad in dazzling steel,
Before the city form'd their dense array.

Leader infatuate, at their head appear'd
 Eupithes, hoping vengeance for his son
 Antinoüs, but was himself ordain'd,
 To meet his doom, and to return no more.
 Then thus Minerva to Saturnian Jove :

O father ! son of Saturn ! Jove supreme !
 Declare the purpose hidden in thy breast.
 Design'st thou civil discord, and the woes
 Of bloody strife, or lasting peace for these ?

To whom the Sov'reign of the realms of air :
 Why asks my daughter ? didst thou not design
 Thyself, that brave Ulysses, coming home,
 Should slay those profligates ? thyself decide,
 But thus I counsel. Since the noble chief
 Hath slain the suitors, now let peace ensue
 Oath bound, and reign Ulysses evermore !
 From their remembrance strike we clean*, ourselves,
 Their slaughter'd sons and brethren ; let the bond
 Of mutual firm accord, as heretofore,
 Unite them, and let wealth and peace abound.

So saying, he stimulated and impell'd
 Minerva prompt before, and to the fields

* Being seated, and domestic broils

Clean overblown.

SHAKESPEARE.

Of Ithaca with instant flight she sped.
Mean-time Ulysses (for their hunger now
And thirst were sated) thus his hinds bespake :

Look ye abroad, lest haply they approach.
He said, and at his word forth went a son
Of Dolius ; at the gate he stood, and thence
Beholding all that multitude at hand,
In accents wing'd Ulysses thus appris'd :

Fly to your arms—they are at hand—they come.
Then all arising put their armour on,
Ulysses with his three, and the six sons
Of Dolius ; Dolius also with the rest
Arm'd, and Laertes, although silver-hair'd,
Warriors perforce. When all were clad alike
In radiant armour, throwing wide the gates
They sallied, and Ulysses led the way.
Then Jove's own daughter Pallas, in the form
And with the voice of Mentor, came in view
Whom seeing Laertiades rejoic'd,
And thus Telemachus, his son, bespake :

Telemachus ! with fearless strides advance,
And, self-instructed, thou shalt quickly learn,
Where fight the bravest. Shame not, now, my son !
Thine and my brave forefathers, whose exploits
Have shar'd, so long, such universal praise.

To whom Telémachus, discreet, replied :
My father ! Thou shalt witness, if thou wilt,
Thyself, my deeds, and seeing them, shalt own,
That they disgrace not aught or tarnish theirs.

Laertes heard and with delight exclaim'd—
What sun hath ris'n to day * ? ye blessed Gods !
My son and grandson emulous dispute
The prize of fame—O joyful day to me † !

Then, drawing nigh, Minerva thus address'd
The veteran king :—Laertes ! O my friend !
And most belov'd of all whom such I deem,
Pray'r off'ring to the virgin azure-ey'd,
And to her father Jove, delay not, shake
Thy lance in air, and give it instant flight.

So saying, the Goddess nerv'd his arm anew.
Then, first adoring Pallas, daughter dread

* *Τίς νό μοι ἡμέρη ἦδε* ;—So Cicero, who seems to translate it—
Proh dii immortales ! Quis hic illuxit dies ?—C.

† So Menander, as cited by Stobæus, Serm. 73.

*Οὐκ ἔστι μείζων ἡδονὴ ταύτης πατρὶ
Ἡ σωφρονεῖντα καὶ φρονεῖντ' ἰδεῖν τινα
Τῶν ἐξ ἑαυτῶ*—————C.

No joy more exquisite a father knows,
Than to observe one sprung from him endu'd
With thought and wisdom.—————

Of sov'reign Jove, he shook his quiv'ring lance,
Hurl'd it, and pierc'd Eupithes. Cheek'd with brass
His helmet was, but through the cloven plate
Swift flew the spear, and started forth beyond.
He fell, and loud his batter'd armour rang.
Then both Ulysses and his noble son
With falchions and with spears of keenest edge
Their hosts assail'd, and of them all had left
None living, none had to his home return'd,
But that Jove's virgin daughter with a voice
Of loud authority thus quell'd them all :

Peace, O ye men of Ithaca ! while yet
The field remains undelug'd with your blood.

So she ; then fear at once pal'd ev'ry cheek.
All trembled at the voice divine ; their arms
Escaping from the grasp fell to the ground,
And, covetous of longer life, each fled
Back to the city. Then Ulysses sent
His voice abroad, and with an eagle's force
Sprang on the people ; but Saturnian Jove
Cast down, incontinent, his smould'ring bolt
At Pallas' feet, and thus the Goddess spake :

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd !
Forbear ; abstain from slaughter ; lest thyself
Incur the vengeance of Saturnian Jove.

So Pallas, whom Ulysses glad obey'd.
Then faithful covenants of peace between
Both sides ensu'd, sworn duly in the sight
Of Jove-born Pallas, who the Mentor seem'd,
In voice and form, familiar to them all.

END OF THE ODYSSEY.

THE
BATTLE
OF THE
FROGS AND MICE.

TRANSLATED INTO
ENGLISH BLANK VERSE

BY THE SAME HAND.

THE
BATTLE
OF THE
FROGS AND MICE.

DESCEND all Helicon into my breast !
O ev'ry virgin of the tuneful choir
Breathe on my song, which I have newly trac'd
In tables open'd on my knees, a song
Of bloodiest note—terrible deeds of Mars,
Well worthy of the ears of all mankind,
Whom I desire to teach, how erst the Mice
Assail'd the Frogs, mimicking in exploit
The prowess of the giant race earth-born.
The rumour once was frequent in the mouths
Of mortal men, and thus the strife began.

A thirsty Mouse (thirsty with fear and flight
From a cat's claws) sought out the nearest lake,
Where, dipping in the flood his downy chin,
He drank delighted. Him the frog far-fam'd

Limnocharis * espied, and thus he spake :

Who art thou, stranger ? whence hast thou arriv'd
On this our border, and who gave thee birth ?
Beware thou trespass not against the truth ;
Lie not ! for should I find thy merit such,
As claims my love, I will conduct thee hence
To my abode, where gifts thou shalt receive
Lib'ral and large, with hospitable fare.
I am the king Physignathus †, rever'd
By the inhabitants of all this pool,
Chief of the frogs for ever. Me, long since,
Peleus ‡ begat, embracing on the banks
Of the Eridanus my mother fair,
Hydromedusa §. Nor thee less than king,
Or leader bold in fight, thy form proclaims,
Stout as it is, and beautiful.—Dispatch—
Speak, therefore, and declare thy pedigree.

He ceas'd, to whom Psycharpax || thus replied :
Illustrious sir ! wherefore hast thou inquir'd
My derivation, known to all, alike
To Gods and men, and to the fowls of Heav'n ?
I am Psycharpax, and the dauntless chief

* The beauty of the lake.

† The pouter.

‡ Of or belonging to mud.

§ Governess of the waters.

|| The crumb-catcher.

Troxartes * is my sire, whose beauteous spouse
 Daughter of Pternotroctes † brought me forth,
 Lichomyle ‡ by name. A cave of earth
 My cradle was, and, in my youngling state,
 My mother nourish'd me with almonds, figs,
 And delicacies of a thousand names.
 But diverse as our natures are, in nought
 Similar, how, alas ! can we be friends ?
 The floods are thine abode, while I partake
 With man his sustenance. The basket, stor'd
 With wheaten loaves thrice kneaded, scapes not me,
 Nor wafer broad, enrich'd with balmy sweets,
 Nor ham in slices spread, nor liver wrapp'd
 In tunic silver-white, nor curds express'd
 From sweetest milk, nor, sweeter still, the full
 Honeycomb, coveted by kings themselves,
 Nor aught by skilful cook invented yet
 Of sauce or seas'ning for delight of man.
 I am brave also, and shrink not at sound
 Of glorious war, but rushing to the van,
 Mix with the foremost combatants. No fear
 Of man himself shakes me, vast as he is,
 But to his bed I steal, and make me sport

* The bread-eater.

† The bacon-eater.

‡ The licker of mill-stones.

Nibbling his fingers' end, or with sharp tooth
 Fretting his heel so neatly, that he sleeps
 Profound the while, unconscious of the bite.
 Two things, of all that are, appal me most,
 The owl and cat. These cause me many a pang.
 As does the hollow gin insidious, fair
 In promises, but in performance foul,
 Engine of death ! yet most of all I dread
 Cats, nimble mousers, who can dart a paw
 After me, enter at what chink I may.
 But to return—your diet, parsley, kail,
 Beet, radish, gourd (for, as I understand
 Ye eat no other), are not to my taste.

Him then with smiles answer'd Physignathus:
 Stranger ! thou vauntest much thy dainty fare,
 But, both on shore and in the lake, we boast
 Our dainties also, and such sights as much
 Would move thy wonder ; for by gift from Jove
 We leap as well as swim, can range the land
 For food, or, diving, seek it in the Deep.
 Wouldst thou the proof ? 'tis easy—mount my back—
 There cling as for thy life, and thou shalt share
 With rapture the delights of my abode.

He said, and gave his back. Upsprang the mouse
 Lightly, and with his arms enfolded fast
 The frog's soft neck. Pleas'd was he, at the first,

With view of many a creek and bay, nor less
 With his smooth swimming on whose back he rode.
 But when, at length, the clear wave dash'd his sides,
 Then, fill'd with penitential sorrows vain
 He wept, pluck'd off his hair, and gath'ring close
 His hinder feet, survey'd with trembling heart
 The novel sight, and wish'd for land again.
 Groans follow'd next, extorted groans, through stress
 Of shiv'ring fear, and, with extended tail
 Drawn like a long oar after him, he pray'd
 For land again; but, while he pray'd, again
 The clear wave dash'd him. Much he shriek'd, and much
 He clamour'd, and, at length, thus, sorrowing, said:

Oh desp'rate navigation strange! not thus
 Europa floated to the shores of Crete
 On the broad back of her enamour'd bull.

And now, dread spectacle to both, behold
 A Hydra! on the lake with crest erect
 He rode, and right toward them. At that sight
 Down went Physignathus, heedless, alas!
 Through fear, how great a prince he should destroy.
 Himself, at bottom of the pool escap'd
 The dreadful death; but, at his first descent
 Dislodg'd, Psycharpax fell into the flood.
 There, stretch'd supine, he clench'd his hands, he
 shriek'd,

Plung'd oft, and, lashing out his heels afar,
 Oft rose again, but no deliv'rance found.
 At length, oppress'd by his drench'd coat, and soon
 To sink for ever, thus he prophesied :

Thou hast releas'd thy shoulders at my cost,
 Physignathus !, unfeeling as the rock,
 But not unnotic'd by the Gods above.
 Ah worst of traitors ! on dry land, I ween,
 Thou hadst not foil'd me, whether in the race,
 Or wrestling-match, or at whatever game.
 Thou hast by fraud prevail'd, casting me off
 Into the waters ; but an eye divine
 Sees all. Nor hope thou to escape the host
 Of Mice, who shall, ere long, avenge the deed.

So saying, he sank and died, whom, while he sat
 Reposing on the lake's soft verge, the Mouse
 Lichopinax * observ'd ; aloud he wail'd,
 And flew with those sad tidings to his friends.
 Grief, at the sound, immeasurable seiz'd
 On all, and, by command, at dawn of day
 The heralds call'd a council at the house
 Of brave Troxartes, father of the prince
 Now lost, a carcase now, nor nigh to land
 Welt'ring, but distant in the middle pool.
 The multitude in haste conven'd, uprose

* The dish-licker.

Troxartes, for his son incens'd, and said :

Ah friends ! although my damage from the Frogs
Sustain'd be greatest, yet is yours not small.

Three children I have lost, wretch that I am,

All sons. A merciless and hungry cat,

Finding mine eldest son abroad, surpris'd

And slew him. Lur'd into a wooden snare

(New machination of unfeeling man

For slaughter of our race, and nam'd a trap)

My second died. And now, as ye have heard,

My third, his mother's and my darling, him

Physignathus hath drown'd in yon abyss.

Haste therefore, and in gallant armour bright

Attir'd, march forth, ye Mice, now seek the foe.

So saying, he rous'd them to the fight, and Mars

Attendant arm'd them. Splitting, first, the pods

Of beans, which they had sever'd from the stalk

With hasty tooth by night, they made them greaves,

Their corslets were of platted straw, well lin'd

With spoils of an excoriated cat.

The lamp contributed its central tin,

A shield for each. The glitt'ring needle long

Arm'd ev'ry gripe with a terrific spear,

And auburn shells of nuts their brows enclos'd.

Thus arm'd the Mice advanc'd, of whose approach
The Frogs appris'd, emerging from the lake,

All throng'd to council, and consid'ring sat
 The sudden tumult and its cause. Then came,
 Sceptre in hand, a herald. Son was he
 Of the renown'd Tyroglyphus*, and call'd
 Embasichytrust†. Charg'd he came to announce
 The horrors of approaching war, and said—

Ye Frogs! the host of Mice send you by me
 Menaces and defiance. Arm, they say,
 For furious fight; for they have seen the prince
 Psycharpax welt'ring on the waves, and drown'd
 By king Physignathus. Ye then, the chiefs
 And leaders of the host of Frogs, put on
 Your armour, and draw forth your bands to battle!

He said, and went. Then were the noble Frogs
 Troubled at that bold message, and while all
 Murmur'd against Physignathus, the king,
 Himself arising, thus denied the charge:

My friends! I neither drown'd the Mouse, nor saw
 His drowning. Doubtless, while he strove in sport
 To imitate the swimming of the Frogs,
 He sank and died. Thus, blame is none in me,
 And these injurious sland'ers do me wrong.
 Consult we, therefore, how we may destroy
 The subtle Mice, which thus we will perform.

* A cheese-rasper. † The explorer of pots and pipkins.

Arm'd and adorn'd for battle, we will wait
 Their coming where our coast is most abrupt.
 Then, soon as they shall rush to the assault,
 Seizing them by the helmet, as they come,
 We will precipitate them, arms and all,
 Into the lake; unskilful as they are
 To swim, their suffocation there is sure,
 And we will build a trophy to record
 The great Mouse-massacre for evermore.

So saying, he gave commandment, and all arm'd.
 With leaves of mallows each his legs incas'd,
 Guarded his bosom with a corslet cut
 From the green beet, with foliage tough of kail
 Fashion'd his ample buckler, with a rush
 Keen-tipp'd, of length tremendous, fill'd his gripe,
 And on his brows set fast a cockle-shell.
 Then on the summit of the loftiest bank,
 Drawn into phalanx firm, they stood, all shook
 Their quiv'ring spears, and wrath swell'd ev'ry breast.

Jove saw them, and assembling all the Gods
 To council in the skies, Behold, he said,
 Yon num'rous hosts, magnanimous, robust,
 And rough with spears, how like the giant race
 They move, or like the Centaurs! smiling, next,
 He ask'd of all the Gods, who favour'd most
 The Mice, and who the Frogs: but, at the last,

Turning toward Minerva, thus he spake:

The Mice, my daughter, need thee ; go'st thou not,
To aid thy friends the Mice, inmates of thine,
Who to thy temple drawn by sav'ry steams
Sacrificial, and day by day refresh'd
With dainties there, dance on thy sacred floor ?

So spake the God, and Pallas thus replied:
My father ! suffer as they may, the Mice
Shall have no aid from me, whom much they wrong,
Marring my wreaths, and plund'ring of their oil
My lamps.—But this, of all their impious deeds,
Offends me most, that they have eaten holes
In my best mantle, which with curious art
Divine I wove, light, easy, delicate ;
And now the artificer, whom I employ'd
To mend it, clamouring demands a price
Exorbitant, which moves me much to wrath,
For I obtain'd on trust those costly threads,
And have not wherewithal to pay th' arrear.
Nor love I more the Frogs, or purpose more
To succour even them, since they not less,
Dolts as they are, and destitute of thought,
Have incommoded me. For when, of late,
Returning from a fight weary and faint
I needed rest, and would have slept, no sleep
Found I, those ceaseless croakers of the lake

Noisy, perverse, forbidding me a wink.
 Sleepless, and with an aching head I lay
 Therefore, until the crowing of the cock.
 By my advice, then, O ye Gods, move not,
 Nor interfere, favouring either side
 Lest ye be wounded; for both hosts alike
 Are valiant, nor would scruple to assail
 Even ourselves. Suffice it, therefore, hence
 To view the battle, safe, and at our ease.

She ceas'd, and all complied. Mean-time, the hosts
 Drew nearer, and in front of each was seen
 A herald, gonfalon in hand; huge gnats
 Through clarions of unwieldy length sang forth
 The dreadful note of onset fierce, and Jove
 Doubled the signal, thund'ring from above.

First with his spear Hypsiboas * assail'd
 Lichenor †. Deep into his body rush'd
 The point, and pierc'd his liver. Prone he fell,
 And all his glossy down with dust defil'd.
 Then Troglodytes ‡ hurl'd his massy spear
 At Pelion §, which he planted in his chest.
 Down dropp'd the Frog, night overwhelm'd him, and he
 died.

Seutlæus ||, through his heart piercing him, slew

* The loud-croaker. † One addicted to licking. ‡ A creeper
 into holes and crannies. § Offspring of the mud. || A feeder on
 beet.

Embasichytrus. Polyphonus * fell,
 Pierc'd through his belly by the spear of bold
 Artophagus †, and prone in dust expir'd.
 Incens'd at sight of Polyphonus slain,
 Limnocharis at Troglodytes cast
 A mill-stone weight of rock; full on the neck
 He batter'd him, and darkness veil'd his eyes.
 At him Lichenor hurl'd a glitt'ring lance,
 Nor err'd, but pierc'd his liver. Trembling fled
 Crambophagus ‡ at that dread sight, and plung'd
 Over the precipice into the lake,
 Yet even there found refuge none, for brave
 Lichenor following, smote him even there.
 So fell Crambophagus, and from that fall
 Never arose, but redd'ning with his blood
 The wave, and wallowing in the strings and slime
 Of his own vitals, near the bank expir'd.
 Limnisius § on the grassy shore struck down
 Tyroglyphus ||; but, at the view alone
 Of terrible Pternoglyphus ** appall'd,
 Fled Calaminthius ††, cast away his shield
 Afar, and headlong plung'd into the lake.

* The noisy.

† The bread-eater.

‡ The cabbage-eater.

§ Of the lake.

|| The cheese-scraper.

** The ham-scraper.

†† So called from the herb calamint.

Hydrocharis * with a vast stone assail'd
 The king Pternophagus †; the rugged mass,
 Descending on his poll, crush'd it; the brain
 Ooz'd through his nostrils drop by drop, and all
 The bank around was spatter'd with his blood.
 Lichopinax with his long spear transpierc'd
 Borborocoites ‡; darkness veil'd his eyes.
 Prassophagus § with vengeful notice mark'd
 Cnissodiocetes ||; seizing with one hand
 His foot, and with the other hand his neck,
 He plung'd, and held him plung'd, till, drown'd, he
 died.

Psycharpax, standing boldly in defence
 Of his slain fellow-warriors, urg'd his spear
 Right through Pelusius **; at his feet he fell,
 And, dying, mingled with the Frogs below.
 Resentful of his death, the mighty Frog
 Pelobates †† a handful cast of mud
 Full at Psycharpax; all his ample front
 He smear'd, and left him scarce a glimpse of day.
 Psycharpax, at the foul dishonour, still
 Exasp'rate more, upheaving from the ground

* One whose delight is in the water.

† The bacon-eater.

‡ The sleeper in the mud.

§ The garlic-eater.

|| The

savory-steam-hunter.
 walker.

** The muddy.

†† The mud-

A rock, that had encumber'd long the bank,
 Hurl'd it against Pelobates ; below
 The knees he smote him, shiver'd his right leg
 In pieces, and outstretch'd him in the dust.
 But him Craugasides*, who stood to guard
 The fallen chief, assail'd ; with his long lance
 He prick'd Psycharpax at the waist ; the whole
 Keen-pointed rush transpierc'd his belly, and all
 His bowels, following the retracted point,
 O'erspread th' ensanguin'd herbage at his side.
 Soon as Sitophagus†, a crippled mouse,
 That sight beheld, limping, as best he could,
 He left the field, and, to avoid a fate
 Not less tremendous, dropp'd into a ditch.
 Troxartes graz'd the instep of the bold
 Physignathus, who, at the sudden pang
 Startled, at once leap'd down into the lake.
 Prassæus‡, at the sight of such a chief
 Floating in mortal agonies enrag'd
 Sprang through his foremost warriors, and dismiss'd
 His pointed rush, but reach'd not through his shield
 Troxartes, baffled by the stubborn disk.

There was a Mouse, young, beautiful, and brave

* The hoarse-croaker.
 who deals much in garlic.

† The cake-eater.

‡ One

Past all on Earth, son of the valiant chief
 Artepibulus*. Like another Mars
 He fought, and Meridarpax † was his name,
 A Mouse, among all Mice without a peer.
 Glorifying in his might on the lake's verge
 He stood, with other Mouse none at his side,
 And swore t' extirpate the whole croaking race.
 Nor doubted any but he should perform
 His dreadful oath, such was his force in arms,
 Had not Saturnian Jove with sudden note
 Perceiv'd his purpose; with compassion touch'd
 Of the devoted Frogs the Sov'reign shook
 His brows, and thus the Deities address'd:

I see a prodigy, ye Pow'rs divine!
 And, with no small amazement smitten, hear
 Prince Meridarpax menacing the Frogs
 With gen'ral extirpation. Haste—be quick—
 Dispatch we Pallas terrible in fight,
 Nor her alone, but also Mars, to quell
 With force combin'd the sanguinary chief.

So spake the Thund'rer, and thus Mars replied:
 Neither the force of Pallas, nor the force
 Of Mars, O Jove! will save the destin'd Frogs

* One who lies in wait for bread.

† The scrap-catcher.

From swift destruction. Let us all descend
 To aid them, or, lest all suffice not, grasp
 And send abroad thy biggest bolt, thy bolt
 Tempestuous, terrour of the Titan race,
 By which those daring enemies thou slew'st,
 And didst coerce with adamantine chains
 Enceladus, and all that monstrous brood.

He said, and Jove dismiss'd the smould'ring bolt.
 At his first thunder, to its base he shook
 The vast Olympian. Then—whirling about
 His forky fires, he launch'd them to the ground,
 And, as they left the Sov'reign's hand, the heart
 Of ev'ry Mouse quak'd, and of ev'ry Frog.
 Yet ceas'd not, even at that shock, the Mice
 From battle, but with double ardour flew
 To the destruction of the Frogs, whom Jove
 From the Olympian heights snow-crown'd again
 Viewing, compassionated their distress,
 And sent them aids. Sudden they came. Broad-back'd
 They were, and smooth like anvils, sickle-claw'd,
 Sideling in gait, their mouths with pincers arm'd
 Shell-clad, crook-knee'd, protruding far before
 Long hands and horns, with eye-balls in the breast,
 Legs in quarternion rang'd on either side,
 And Crabs their name. They, seizing by his leg,

His arm, his tail a Mouse, cropp'd it, and snapp'd
His polish'd spear. Appall'd at such a foe,
The miserable Mice stood not, but fled
Heartless, discomfited.—And now the sun
Descending clos'd this warfare of a day.

THE END.



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